



**PENTECOSTALS AND POLITICS IN GHANA'S FOURTH REPUBLIC:
FROM ENCLAVE TO ENGAGEMENT**

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ABSTRACT

Using a case study of six Pentecostal ministries, spanning four strands of Pentecostalism in Ghana, this study examines Pentecostals' engagement with politics during the Fourth Republican era of Ghana's political history (1993-present). The aim is to discern whether there is a new and distinctive Pentecostal political engagement different from that of Historic Mission Churches, and from its own past, and evaluate its significance. To address this, three practical areas of Pentecostal participation in politics are examined: (1) democracy; (2) political economy; and, (3) prophetic politics. The argument is that Pentecostals in Ghana have transitioned from an 'enclave' community to one of sustained political engagement. The study demonstrates that this transition entails both continuities and discontinuities in Pentecostal political engagement. The new elements that are highlighted are the development of a distinctive prophetic politics focussed on 'divine prediction,' which forecasts political happenings, and more active and unique ways of participating in Ghana's democracy and economy that closely reference the democratic and national economic goals. The study evidences the academic value in widening studies on Pentecostal political engagement beyond prosperity teachings and enchanted world views to include Pentecostal practice, alongside Pentecostal theologies. The thesis contributes to advancing knowledge specifically in the areas of Pentecostals and politics, and Christianity and politics in Ghana, and West Africa more generally.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACDEG	African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance
ACI	Action Chapel International
AGREDS	Assemblies of God Relief and Development Services
AICs	African Instituted or Initiated Churches
AIR	African Indigenous Religions
AoG-G	Assemblies of God, Ghana
CBC	Catholic Bishops Conference
CCAG	Concerned Clergy Association of Ghana
CCG	Christian Council of Ghana
CMs	Charismatic Ministries
CoP	Church of Pentecost
CPMs	Classical Pentecostal Ministries
EC	Electoral Commission
GES	Ghana Evangelical Society
GCBC	Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference
GPCC	Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Council
GSGDA	Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda
GWPMI	Glorious Word Power Ministries International
HMCs	Historic Mission Churches
ICGC	International Central Gospel Church
NACCC	National Association of Charismatic and Christian Churches
NDC	National Democratic Congress
NPMs	Neo-Prophetic Ministries
NPP	New Patriotic Party

PMs	Pentecostal Ministries
PNDC	Provisional National Defence Council

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

We have acknowledged with heavy hearts a statement made on the Floor of Parliament by the Member of Parliament for the Daboya Mankarigu Constituency in the Northern Region of Ghana to the effect that cheating women must be stoned to death.¹ Our worry stems from the fact that so far, his party, the NDC (National Democratic Congress), and the Parliamentary leadership have not been heard to have taken any serious action to stem the damage that this statement is doing to the image of Ghana as a peaceful and a democratic nation. We condemn this statement as primitive and sexist, and that it has no place in our modern world and democracy. An honourable man would not be seen advocating for this. All over the world, we have seen the activities of extremists who hide behind the SHARIA LAW to perpetuate gross human rights abuse against fellow human beings. ... We know that by parliamentary practice, statements that are made in a bad light on the floor ... are made to be withdrawn by the Speaker.... We call on the Speaker to order the said statement to be expunged from the Parliamentary Hansard, and on the NDC party to distance itself from this statement. This has nothing to do with free speech. This is an attack on our Democratic credentials and integrity as Ghanaians. Both Christians and Muslims are comfortable living under the 1992 Constitution of Ghana and this subtle attempt to introduce sharia law into our laws is an unfortunate move that must be discouraged in every way. (Concerned Clergy Association of Ghana, November 14, 2014).

1.0.0 Introduction

Previous scholarly works have examined the ways in which African Pentecostal Ministries (PMs) have engaged with politics. These works largely posit that PMs largely spiritualise politics.² Yet recent events such as the Concerned Clergy Association of Ghana's (an association of Pentecostal Ministries) press release reproduced above, in reaction to a statement made by a Member of Parliament (MP), indicate a shift in the Pentecostal engagement with politics in Ghana. To be sure, PMs have not abandoned their former ways of spiritualising political issues. Yet they have increasingly transitioned into analysing matters of state in a profane manner over the last two decades of Ghana's political history. PMs have moved from their limited focus on spirituality and taken a direct interest in the secular affairs of the state. In light of these developments, there is a need to revisit these Pentecostal engagements and reassess the scholarly conclusions on the engagement of this stream of Christianity with politics in Ghana.

This study demonstrates the transition of PMs from an 'enclave' communities to one of sustained political engagement by addressing the question: Is there a new and distinctive Pentecostal political engagement that is different from that of the Historic Mission Churches (HMCs)³ and from its own past? To answer this question, the study analyses Pentecostal

¹ The MP was contributing to a debate on proposed amendments to the Intestate Succession law of Ghana.

² Stephen Ellis and Gerrie ter Haar, "Religion and Politics in Sub-Saharan Africa," *Journal of Modern African Studies* 36, no. 2 (1998): 175–201; Paul Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity: Pentecostalism in a Globalizing African Economy* (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2004), 161.

³ The HMCs were established by earlier missionary efforts. They are direct descendants of the Reformation and are variously referred to as Missionary Instituted Churches, Older Churches and Mainline Churches. Examples are the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, Methodist Church of Ghana and the Catholic Church.

engagement with politics during the period of Ghana's fourth attempt at restoring democratic rule (Fourth Republican era), in the period from 1993 to the present.⁴ It focuses on the determinative factors driving the new orientation of PMs towards politics, the trends that have emerged, and the significance of these religious engagements in the political realm.

The study explores the evidence relating to a set of PMs in Ghana, specifically, six ministries and three umbrella organisations which can broadly be classified into four strands of Pentecostal ministries. The study acknowledges the diversities that exist within PMs and the fact that scholars do not agree completely on the movements that can be classified as Pentecostal. Nonetheless, Cephas Omenyo has provided a helpful typology which includes various groups that are not always treated as PMs in a narrow sense, but that fit within a broader Pentecostal tradition that is evident in Ghana.⁵ This study, therefore, adopts Omenyo's typology to map the field.

1.1.0 Background Issues

This chapter has two main sections. The first is, an overview of religion and politics in Ghana, including the encounters between Christianity and politics prior to the Fourth Republic, and the origins and the spectacular growth of Ghanaian Pentecostalism. This section will elucidate the political and religious setting within which Pentecostalism emerged in Ghana, and introduce the background of the principal PMs, umbrella organisations and actors in this study. Secondly, the framework of the study will be outlined in terms of its scope, key research questions, arguments, an overview of the thesis as well as the sources and methods employed in the study.

1.1.1 Politics in Ghana

African society prior to colonisation provided us with a model of how politics and religion merged.⁶ Before colonisation, with its attending effect of the secularisation of state governance, the mix between religion and politics was never contested as religion gave legitimacy to state authority. The decline in the influence of indigenous political systems (Chieftaincy), which was tied to religion, began with the coming of Western European explorers and traders, and

⁴ Fourth Republic is Ghana's fourth attempt of consolidating democracy after a series of military interventions spanning three and half decades.

⁵ Cephas Omenyo, "The Charismatic Renewal Movement in Ghana," *The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 16, no. 2 (1994): 169.

⁶ Elom Dovlo, "Religion in the Public Sphere: Challenges and Opportunities in Ghanaian Lawmaking, 1989-2004," *Brigham Young University Law Review* 2005, no. 3 (2005): 629.

subsequent colonisation.⁷ This shifted the sacred political power of chiefs to the secular powers of colonial authorities.

Of all the countries that traded with the indigenous people, it was the British who succeeded in colonising what later became known as the Gold Coast. The British occupied parts of the Gold Coast after they had negotiated the Bond of 1844, a treaty that created the legal foundation for the colonisation of the coastal area by the British. They were later to extend their dominance to Ashanti (one of the most powerful African kingdoms during the period) when they defeated it in a war in 1901 and declared it as a protectorate in 1902. This paved the way for the British to pursue their interests in the Northern Territories, whose trading activities with the coast were controlled by the Ashanti. In 1898 and 1899, the French and Germans who also had interests in the Northern Territories settled on a demarcation agreement with the British; the areas which are present day Upper East, Upper West and the Northern Regions of Ghana, were also declared a British Protectorate in 1902. However, the borders of Ghana were not finalised until 1956 when the Volta Region of Ghana voted in a plebiscite to become part of the Gold Coast. Thus, the four territories that combined during the British colonial rule to form Ghana as at independence were the Volta Region (British Mandated Togoland), the Northern Territories, Ashanti and the Coastal Regions.

After many decades of British occupation, the people of the Gold Coast began to agitate for self-rule. Historically, the nationalist movement towards self-governance started after the Second World War (1945)⁸ and led to the formation of the two largest political parties then, namely the Convention People's Party (CPP) and the United Gold Coast Convention. The CPP won the 1957 elections; the Gold Coast became an independent state with a new name, Ghana, and Dr Kwame Nkrumah was its first President.⁹ After independence, Ghana further gained Republican status on 1 July 1960.¹⁰

⁷ See Kumi Ansah-Koi, "Walking a Political Tightrope: Chiefs, Chieftaincy and the 1996 Elections in Ghana," in *The 1996 Elections and Democratic Consolidation in Ghana*, ed. Joseph R.A. Ayee (Legon: Political Science Department, 1997), 140. See also Chris Abotchie, "Has the Position of the Chief Become Anachronistic in Contemporary Ghanaian Politics," in *Chieftaincy in Ghana: Culture, Governance and Development*, ed. Irene K. Odotei and Awedoba (Accra: Sub-Saharan Publishers, 2006), 172.

⁸ Vincent B. Khapoya, *African Experience: An Introduction* (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc, 1999), 149 & 173.

⁹ The present name Ghana was chosen by the leaders who negotiated independence from the British. Ghana was the name of an ancient empire which covers present day Sudan-Mali. The name was chosen because that empire has some traits similar to that of the present Ghana in terms of natural resources.

¹⁰ E. Kofi Quashigah, *The 1992 Constitution of Ghana* (University of Ghana, Legon: Faculty of Law, University of Ghana, n.d.), 2.

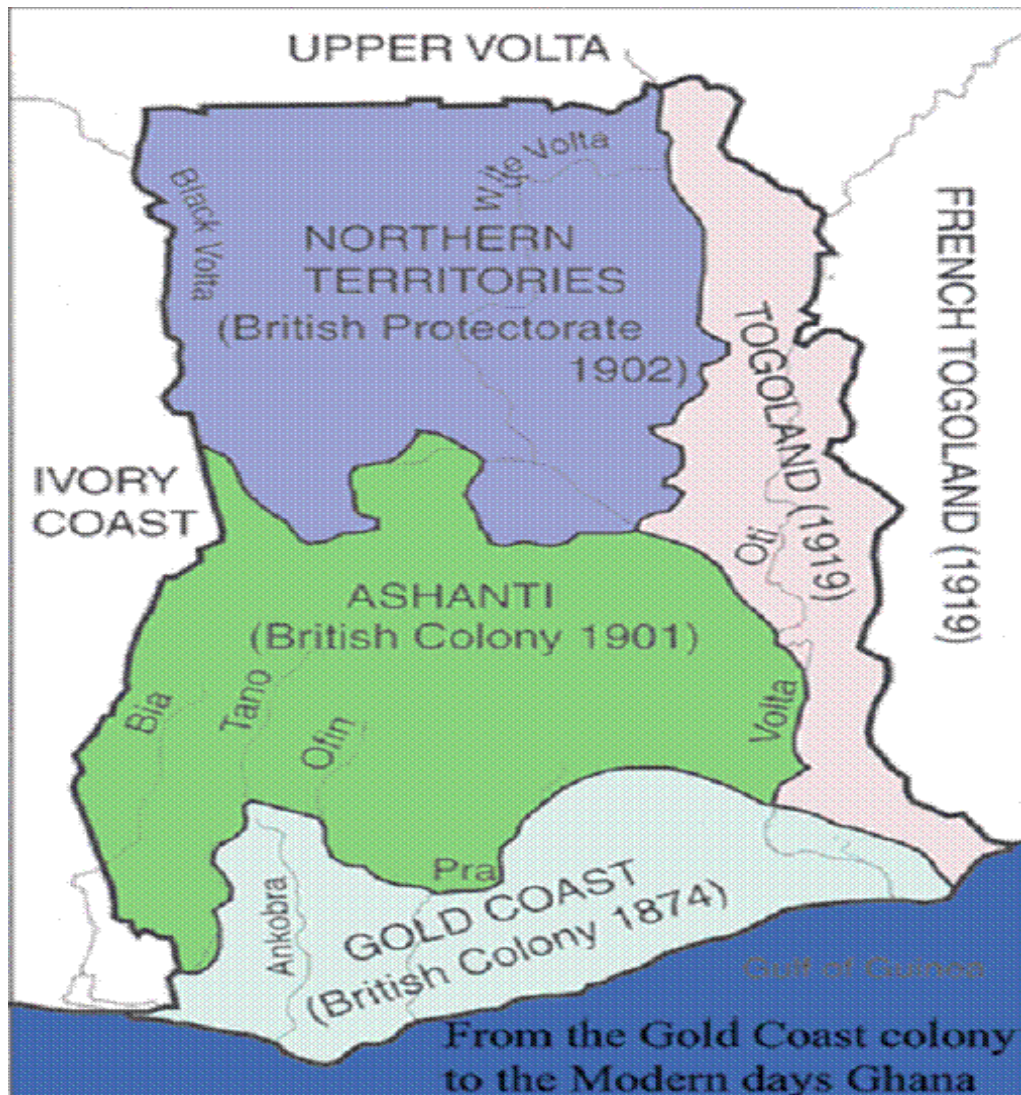


Figure 1.0: Map of Gold Coast

Credit: African Studies Centre, Michigan State University (See Exploring Africa, <http://exploringafrica.matrix.msu.edu/module-twenty-four-activity-two/>)

As was the case in other parts of Sub-Saharan Africa, the post-independence era in Ghana did not significantly depart from the separation of religion and politics as was the case in the colonial era. For example, though chiefs and other nationalists helped in the independence struggle, the First Republican government of Nkrumah relegated these groups to the background. It pursued this through diverse means, including legislation such as the 1958 Preventive Detention Act (PDA), which limited association based on religious and other affiliations, thus continuing the colonial attempt to secularise the emerging state. Among other things, the Act allowed the government to arrest and detain people without trial for up to five years subject to renewal.¹¹ Importantly, this situation was resisted on several fronts by both

¹¹ Quashigah, *The 1992 Constitution of Ghana*, 2.

religious and non-religious groups in Ghana. This was in part because religion, particularly Christianity, was very influential and therefore Nkrumah took these steps to curtail its clout.¹²

Nkrumah's resolve to perpetually stay in power under the one-party system, together with the economic hardship of the 1960s, led to a military takeover in 1966. This was the beginning of military involvement in the politics of Ghana that saw the toppling of two democratically elected governments— the Progress Party (1969-1972) and Peoples' National Convention (1979-1981)—and the rule of five military regimes in the period up to 1993.¹³ To date, the Fourth Republic has witnessed the smooth transfer of power from one democratically elected government to another. The Fourth Republican Constitution of Ghana provides that elections are held to elect an Executive President and Members of Parliament (the Legislature) once every four years. Although many political parties have contested elections in Ghana, power has rotated between the New Patriotic Party (the NPP) and the National Democratic Congress (the NDC)—an offshoot of the military Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) which initiated the Fourth Republic.

1.1.2 Religion in Ghana

Ghanaian society is pluralistic with different religious traditions co-existing together. Yet it is shaped particularly by Christianity, Islam and African Indigenous Religions (AIRs)—its three dominant religions. The other minor religious groups, mostly from Asia, include Buddhism, Hinduism, Shintoism, Hare Krishna, Nichiren Shoshu Soka Gakkai, Sri Sathya Sai Baba Sera and Rastafarianism. In 2018, Christianity remains the largest religion in Ghana. The first post-independence census undertaken in 1960 reported that 41% of the population were Christians. The proportion of Christians has grown substantially since, and the last census, undertaken in 2010, reported that 71.2% of Ghanaians claimed Christian affiliation.¹⁴ Between the same two periods of 1960 and 2010, Islam and AIRs have been declining. The current percentage of the Muslim population is 17.6%, down from 25% in 1960; adherents of AIRs, 23% of the Ghanaian

¹² See Abamfo, Ofori Atiemo, Religion and Custom are not the same: Sacred Traditional States and Religious Human Rights in Contemporary Ghana. In: Pieter Coertzen, Len Hamsen and Christy Green, eds. *Law and Religion in Africa – The Quest for the Common Good* (Stellenbosch: Sun Press: 2015), 157. See also Abraham Akrong, "Religion and Traditional Leadership in Ghana," in *Chieftaincy in Ghana: Culture, Governance and Development*, ed. Irene K. Odotei and Albert K. Awedoba (Accra: Sub-Saharan Publishers, 2006), 195.

¹³ The five military regimes were: National Redemption Council (1972-1975), Supreme Military Council I (1975-1978), Supreme Military Council II (1978-1979), Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (June 1979-September 1979), and Provisional National Defence Council (1981-1992).

¹⁴ Ghana Statistical Service, *2010 Population and Housing Census, Summary Report of Final Results* (Ghana Statistical Service, May, 2012), 6.

population in 1960, are now down to 5.2%. The increasing growth in the Christian population means that Christianity has a growing influence on the socio-economic and political spheres in Ghana.

AIRs, as the native religions of Ghana, were the most prevalent religion in the country before the advent of Islam and Christianity. Some scholars have argued that Christianity and Islam thrived because AIRs are receptive to other religions¹⁵. AIRs are tribal-based religions that believe in the existence of two worlds (visible and invisible) made up of a hierarchy of gods that work in harmony to direct the destiny of individuals and society as a whole. The Supreme Being (God), who is the highest God, works through intermediaries of gods and ancestors in communicating with humanity. The functions of these intermediaries are supported by other lesser spirit beings through charms and amulets that are usually protective devices used by adherents to ward off the evil that is believed to threaten individuals, families and communities.¹⁶ This strong connection with the invisible (spirit world) is harmoniously maintained by rituals to ensure prosperity in this life and thereafter.

Islam, the first foreign religion to arrive in the Gold Coast, was introduced by the traders and merchants from Sahelian tribes of West Africa in the 15th century.¹⁷ Starting from the Northern Territories, it made inroads to Ashanti in the 18th century and the Coast around the same period through freed slaves from the West Indies. The early carriers of Islam made considerable impact on their hosts as they played leading roles in the formation of states, strengthening the spiritual base of local political authorities and introduced literacy (Arabic). Nathan Samwini and Ivor Wilks have noted that many of these Muslims, who were warriors and clerics, were instrumental in the formation of kingdoms.¹⁸ Yet another resource introduced by Islam to the Northern Territories was Arabic literacy,¹⁹ which became useful in the

¹⁵ See Jacob K. Olupona, *African Traditional Religions in Contemporary Society* (Paragon House, 1991), 31-32; Victor I Ezigbo, "Religion and Divine Presence: Appropriating Christianity from within African Indigenous Religions' Perspective," in eds. Afe Adogame, Bolaji Bateye, Ezra Chitando, *African Traditions in the Study of Religion in Africa: Emerging Trends, Indigenous Spirituality and Interface with other World Religions* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2012), 200; Elizabeth Amoah, "African Indigenous Religions and Inter-Religious Relationship," paper presented Autumnal International Interfaith Centre Lecture on *Stimulating Interfaith Activity and Discussion* at Mansfield College, Oxford, October 1998.

¹⁶ For comprehensive details on deities in AIRs see John S. Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, Second Revised and Enlarged Edition (Gaborone: Heinemann Education Botswana Publishers, 1989) and Kofi Asare Opoku, *West African Traditional Religion* (Accra: FEP International Private Ltd, 1978)

¹⁷ Nathan Samwini, *Muslim Resurgence in Ghana since 1950: Its Effects upon Muslim and Muslim Christian Relations* (London: Transaction Publishers, 2003), 23.

¹⁸ Ivor Wilks, "The Juala and the Expansion of Islam into the Forest," in *The History of Islam in Africa*, ed. Nehemia Levtzion and R.L. Pouwels (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2000), 99.

¹⁹ Wilks, "The Juala and the Expansion of Islam into the Forest," in *The History of Islam in Africa*, ed. Nehemia Levtzion and R.L. Pouwels (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2000), 99.

reconstruction of the history of the Northern Territories and Ashanti²⁰ fostering effective and prudent management by the chiefs of their regions through record keeping. As a result of this, most clerics had links to central authorities which they leveraged to convert some authorities.²¹

While Islam made a strong impact in the Northern Territories, Christianity made inroads in the Southern coastal areas. Although Christianity was first introduced by Franciscan Friars accompanying Portuguese traders as chaplains in 1482,²² it was not until 1828 that the first concerted attempt at evangelising the Gold Coast was initiated.²³ African spiritual causality, which the first missionaries regarded as superstitious, made conversion difficult and most local converts either reverted back to their indigenous religion or practised syncretism. However, when indigenous people, especially prophets, were engaged in missionary work and the new missionaries addressed the issue of causality many people were converted between 1874 to the early 1900s.²⁴ While the early Christian missionaries encountered initial challenges in converting the indigenes, they were nonetheless very successful, especially in education. For example, most of the churches played a key role in English literary development and the setting up of educational institutions.²⁵

There are currently three major Islamic groups in Ghana, namely Sunnis, Shiis and Ahmadis. Unlike in parts of Nigeria, especially Northern Nigeria where there are constant conflicts among religious groups especially between Muslims and Christians, in Ghana, in spite of previously recorded cases of inter- and intra-religious tensions, most religious groups cooperate and live cordially. A number of factors account for this, including the mode of colonialism adopted in the two countries. There are also, for example, intermarriages among religious groups. In the areas of employment, there are Muslims who work mostly as security men for the major churches in Ghana.

²⁰ Wilks, "The Jula and the Expansion of Islam into the Forest, 24.

²¹ Jack Goody, "Restricted Literacy in Northern Ghana," in *Literacy Traditional Societies*, ed. Jack Goody (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 213.

²² Samwini, *Muslim Resurgence in Ghana since 1950: It Effects upon Muslim and Muslim Christian Relations*, 43. See also Emmanuel Kingsley Larbi, *Pentecostalism: The Eddies of Ghanaian Pentecostalism* (Centre for Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies and Blessed Publications, 2001), 16.

²³ Samwini, *Muslim Resurgence in Ghana since 1950*, 16.

²⁴ Sarah N. Nkansah, "The Native Evangelist," Blogger.com, *Blaklane* (blog), February 4, 2012, <http://blaklane.blogspot.co.nz/2012/02/welcome-to-lane.html>; Gerald H. Anderson, ed. *Biographical Dictionary of Christian Missions* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), found at *Dictionary of African Christian Biography*, http://www.dacb.org/stories/ghana/upon_sampson2/.

²⁵ See Cephas Omenyo, "A Comparative Analysis of the Development Intervention of Protestant and Charismatic/Pentecostal Organisations in Ghana," *Swedish Missiological Themes* 94, no. 1 (2006): 5–22.

1.2.0 Christianity and Politics Prior to 1993

Christian churches and church leaders have consistently engaged political actors since the advent of Christianity in Ghana. However, prior to 1993, the terms of direct engagement were shaped largely by the Historic Mission Churches (HMCs) with PMs playing a limited role. The HMCs, who are mainly led by two umbrella groups namely the Christian Council of Ghana and Catholic Bishops' Conference, employed various strategies including communiqués, pastoral letters, and publications in their newsletters as well as seeking an audience with political actors in their engagement. The overview of this period is important as it demonstrates through three key phases of Ghana's political history (namely the colonial, the struggle for independence, and the pre-Fourth Republic eras), how the churches and church leaders engaged political actors. It also establishes the shape and trends in Christian engagement with politics which became the 'normal' against which the entry of the PMs into the public sphere is examined. The main focus of this section is to demonstrate how the increased Pentecostal engagement with politics in Ghana is a Fourth Republic phenomenon.

1.2.1 Christianity and Colonial Era Government

The seeming lack of direct political engagement of PMs, as I demonstrate below, has a long colonial antecedent. E. Kofi Quashigah has noted that "the intrusion of Judeo-Christian colonialists into the territories that became Ghana had a very far-reaching influence on the impact of Christianity into social and public life as well as governmental activity."²⁶ Prior to colonialism and Christian evangelisation, the relations between European Christian traders and their African indigenous counterparts were relatively cordial. This period did not witness a lot of conflicts as Christianity was in the quarantine form—restricted to the castles and forts where the merchants resided.²⁷ However, conflicts arose when conversion began. This was due to the effort of foreign missionaries to instil European lifestyle and segregate converts to prevent them from partaking in traditional rituals.²⁸ Traditional leaders who resisted this system on the basis of it breaking down family and societal ties were arrested and some fined by local courts set up by the British colonisers who offered protection for the foreign missionaries.

While the colonial administration protected the foreign missionaries against local traditional authorities, it clamped down on African Initiated Churches (AICs), which are

²⁶ E. Kofi Quashigah, "Religion and Law in Ghana" (Faculty of Law, University of Ghana, Legon, n.d.), 331.

²⁷ See S.K. Odampten, *The Missionary Factor in Ghana's Development: 1820-1880* (Accra: Waterville Publishing House, 1978), 32.

²⁸ Cephas Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism: A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Church in Ghana* (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum, 2002), 43.

considered the earliest PMs.²⁹ One reported example was the persecution of the members of the Church of William Wadé Harris. In a petition addressed to the then colonial administration in 1938, Madam Harris Grace Thannie,³⁰ the leader of the Church complained about the persecution of her members. Although Thannie did not mention the reasons for her allegations, it can be inferred from her petition that it was in relation to witchcraft. Colonial policy from 1930 onwards had made witchcraft accusations illegal and took away the power of the chiefs to try cases involving these.³¹ This law meant that people who suspected that they had been bewitched by others could not seek redress. Hence some of the victims of witchcraft turned to the AICs, a situation the colonial administration tried to stop in order to forestall any witchcraft accusation. In summary, while the foreign missionaries' activities were encouraged, those of local initiators were not.

Nonetheless, not all actions of the colonial authorities favoured the foreign Christian mission. For example, colonial authorities placed various restrictions on missionary activities. Thus, it was reported that the Assemblies of God (AoG-G) Foreign Mission (one of the earliest Classical Pentecostal Churches), Catholic Missionaries and the Society of African Mission were initially frustrated in their attempt to evangelise in the Northern Territories.³² Archival records of the British Government and Minutes from the meetings of the Christian Churches that operated in British Territories indicates that the policy was influenced by their experience particularly in India where some missionary groups promoted their national interest during missionary work and the need to protect British interests financially and territorially.³³

Yet another development that affected the foreign missionary activities was the perception among the locals in the Gold Coast that missionaries were in league with colonial

²⁹ See Cephas Omenyo, "The History of Charismatic Churches in Ghana," *The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 16, no. 2 (1994): 169–85. The AICs are considered as one of the PMs (oldest) because they share common beliefs (such as spiritual causality, prophecy) and engage in similar rituals (such as prayers and exorcism).

³⁰ See David A. Shank, "Prophet Harris, the 'Black Elijah' of West Africa," *Studies of Religion in Africa*, Abridged by Jocelyn Murray, no. 10 (1994): 20.

³¹ Abamfo Ofori Atiemo, *Religion and the Inculturation of Human Rights* (New York: Bloomsburg, 2013), 103.

³² See for example H.W. Debrunner, *History of Christianity in Ghana* (Accra: Waterville Publishing House, 1967), 224.

³³ The following documents detail some of the reasons that informed for the British Colonial administration's policy on granting access to missionary groups. See Office of the National Christian Council, "Minutes of a Meeting of the Executive Committee of the National Christian Council, Calcutta" (Office of the National Christian Council, November 4, 1925), 13–17, Library of the Yale School of Divinity. See also Office of the National Missionary Council, "Minutes of the Thirteen Meeting of the Executive Committee, National Missionary Council, Calcutta." (Office of the National Missionary Council, May 5, 1920), 9–10, Day Mission Library., British Government, "Admission into India of Aliens Desiring to Undertake Missionary, Educational, or Other Philanthropic Work in India after the War" (British Government, n.d.), 1, Enclosure to S/SCise 2/8/1921, accessed April 29, 2015.

authorities.³⁴ For example, the initial difficulties the Basel and Methodist missionaries faced in converting the people of Ashanti were attributed to colonial domination because it followed the British defeats of the Ashanti in 1874, 1896 and 1901. Hence the local people's refusal to convert to Christianity since the religion was associated with the British Colonial government.³⁵

Notwithstanding these suspicions, the foreign mission churches showed leadership as they were engaged in settling disputes between the colonial administration and the indigenous authorities. For instance, the coming of Thomas Birch Freeman of the Wesleyan Mission, and Andreas Reese of the Basel Mission, saw the beginning of closer relations between the Europeans (Danish and British) and the Ashanti.³⁶

Two key issues can be discerned from Christian engagements with politics during the colonial era. The first is that colonialism influenced Christian missionary activities during the period. In this process, the foreign missionary groups that now constitute HMCs were favoured over local initiated churches, like AICs by virtue of the fact that they practised Christian activities that the colonial administration was familiar with. In contrast, there was a clampdown on the activities of locally initiated PMs. This meant that the religious liberties of the locally initiated churches were hindered, and arguably violated, during the period.

Secondly, the foreign missionaries showed signs of political leadership, especially in the settlement of disputes between the local authorities and the colonial authorities. In contrast, the fledgling indigenous PMs focused more on developing the base of their ministries. They showed little desire to engage in the political activities that were then concentrated in the Coastal Territories. Hence, PMs like Wadé Harris's Church and the Assemblies of God were focused on miracles and the planting of new churches.

1.2.2 The Independence Struggle

The call for self-government that started after the Second World War (from 1945) was not limited to the Gold Coast alone. Many Africans under colonial rule were also calling for independence.³⁷ In the Gold Coast the struggle was waged in part by the Chiefs, Christian

³⁴ Peter Clarke, *West Africa and Christianity* (London: Edward Arnold Publishers, 1986), 58.

³⁵ It was not until the reign of Kwaku Dua I (1834-67) that a missionary station was allowed. See Samwini, *Muslim Resurgence in Ghana since 1950*, 47; Clarke, *West African and Christianity*, 58.

³⁶ Samwini, *Muslim Resurgence in Ghana*, 47.

³⁷ Vincent B. Khapoya, *African Experience: An Introduction* (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc, 1999), 149.

leaders, Trade Unions, political parties and welfare associations.³⁸ Christian support for the nationalist struggle was a clear signal of support for the principle of self-government

However, it is important to note that the Christian solidarity campaign was largely led by HMCs. PMs did not contribute in any significant way to the independence struggle. Indeed, no current literature on the independence movement, or on Pentecostalism in Ghana, identifies the PMs as having made any contribution to the independence struggle, and neither did my research uncover any such evidence. Two main factors made the HMCs' role in the nationalist struggle possible. First, most HMCs, unlike the local initiated PMs, were established before the nationalist push for independence began. Hence the HMCs were usually ahead of the government and provided some nationalist leaders a platform to express their call for self-government.³⁹ In doing this, they continued to show leadership by availing columns in their correspondence for nationalist issues. These Christian newsletters include the *Christian Messenger Examiner*, *Christian Reporter* and the *Gold Coast Methodist Times*. Accordingly, the lead role of HMCs in providing the platform for advocating self-government was a boost for the nationalist cause.

The second reason was the education provided through their mission schools. Most of the nationalists in the independence struggle went through HMC schools and though some did not become devoted Christians, their stint with the missionary schools prepared them for the struggle.⁴⁰ Dr Nkrumah and almost all the members of his 1951 cabinet had Christian educations.⁴¹ Hence, through education the HMCs became an "unwitting catalyst in the development of African nationalism by equipping the African intellectually to fight for his freedom"⁴²

In the end, the direct involvement of the HMCs demonstrates that they did not simply pay lip service or sit on the fence. They were active players. The nationalist struggle paid off, and having gone through a series of local level elections, the Gold Coast finally gained independence.

³⁸ Khapoya, *African Experience*, 173.

³⁹ David Kimble, *A Political History of Ghana: The Rise of Gold Coast Nationalism 1850-1928*. (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), 162.

⁴⁰ John Pobee, *Kwame Nkrumah and the Church in Ghana: 1949-1966* (Accra: Asempa Publishers, 1998), 106.

⁴¹ Pobee, *Kwame Nkrumah*, 106.

⁴² Khapoya, *African Experience*, 155.

1.2.3 The Post-Colonial Era to 1993

During the immediate post-independence era, most existing PMs, in particular Classical Pentecostal Ministries (CPMs), were still fledgling, while other Charismatic Ministries (CMs) that later came to be influential had also not yet been initiated. Hence during this era, once again, the HMCs, mainly led by the Christian Council of Ghana (CCG) and the Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference (GCBC), took the lead role in the Christian engagement with political actors. Thus, as will be demonstrated below, although PMs were involved on occasions in the politics of the day, these were episodic appearances in which they were forced or coerced by authoritarian regimes that needed religious legitimacy. In other words, these were not sustained engagements of a kind comparable to those of the CCG and GCBC during the earlier Colonial Era and the struggle for independence.

Founded on 30 October, 1929, by five churches, the CCG is the leading ecumenical body in Ghana. It currently comprises 26-member churches and three Christian organisations. The goal of the Council is to “contribute to the development of a peaceful, just and equitable society in Ghana, where there would be an increased realisation of social and economic rights of disadvantaged women, men and children.”⁴³ To properly undertake its mandate the Council in a recent review of its activities has included research-based advocacy which focuses on governance, social and economic justice, human rights and gender to its core activities.

The Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference (GCBC) or Bishops' Conference is the central Body of the Church stipulated in the Canon Law of the Catholic Church (Canon 447-459) which is the same for all member churches across the world. Its main purpose is to “deliberate on matters of concern to the Church in Ghana and to encourage activities in accordance with the needs of the times.”⁴⁴

These two historic umbrella church organisations mainly rely on their sermons, memorandums and communiqués to seek audiences with political actors. They also use open letters and publications in their monthly newsletters to engage post-independence regimes. Engagements through these media were usually confrontational because of the military's penchant to overthrow validly elected governments or the desire of governments to change aspects of the national constitution to enable them to stay in power perpetually. The HMCs' resolve to forestall these trends by advocating restoration of multi-party democracy, with the transfer of power from one democratically elected government to another, resulted in open

⁴³ Christian Council of Ghana, “About Us” <http://www.christiancouncilgh.org/Pages/History.php>

⁴⁴ Catholics Bishop's Conference, “About Us,” <http://cbcgha.org/cbc/about-us/history>

confrontations with these regimes. Nonetheless, the HMCs made their views and suggestions public without any fear of political abuse, sometimes at the expense of their lives.

For instance, in 1977, the CCG and the GCBC expressed their concern about the one-sided manner in which the military government of General Ignatius Kutu Acheampong (National Liberation Council) was promoting a proposed form of government—Union Government (UNIGOV).⁴⁵ They were worried about a military clampdown on civil society organisations and individuals who were against this proposal.⁴⁶ Their concern was expressed in a memo sent to the government in 1978 with a follow-up audience with Acheampong the same year.⁴⁷

The HMCs were also concerned with the excesses that accompanied each mutiny including military brutality, instant justice and in some instances, the summary execution of members of an overthrown regime without proper trial—as was the case in 1979.⁴⁸ Using their newsletters, in particular the *Methodist Times* and the *Catholic Standard*, the two groups consistently drew the attention of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council that overthrew the National Liberation Council to the various human rights abuses perpetrated by it and its allies.⁴⁹ The two groups also expressed similar sentiments when J.J. Rawlings, who led the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council, overthrew the first and the only Third Republican government whose election he had supervised under a new revolutionary name—PNDC.

However, these military regimes saw the HMCs' call and criticisms as a threat to its popular support and took various means to 'silence' them, including targeted killings and decrees. For example, the PNDC has been accused of orchestrating the killings of Rev. Fr. Kuka (a Catholic priest) in 1985,⁵⁰ and Rev. Francis Akwasi Amoako, the originator of the Resurrection Power Ministries in 1990. The regime also issued decrees that banned sponsored religious programmes on the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation, the state-owned media, which featured mainly sermons and other activities of the HMCs. The same regime in 1989 introduced the Religious Bodies Registration Law (PNDC Law 221), which was opposed by the HMCs

⁴⁵ Union Government was proposed by the National Liberation Council and was to be composed of military and civilians. This was to make Ghana a non-party state.

⁴⁶ Pobee, *Religion and Politics in Ghana*, 60-61.

⁴⁷ Pobee, *Religion and Politics in Ghana*, 60.

⁴⁸ Dzodzi Tsikata and Wayo Seini, *Identities, Inequalities and Conflicts in Ghana*, Working Paper 5 (Oxford: CRISE, 2004), 22.

⁴⁹ Ghana Bishops Speak, A Collection of Communiqués, Memoranda and Pastoral Letters of the Ghana Catholic Bishops Conference (Accra: National Catholic Secretariat, 1999), 36.

⁵⁰ Africa Watch, "Ghana: Official Attacks on Religious Freedom," Ghana, News from Africa Watch (Washington: Human Rights Watch, May 18, 1990), 17. Africa Watch is a non-governmental organisation created by Human Rights Watch in May 1988 to monitor human rights practices in Africa and to promote respect for internationally recognised standards.

because it sought to regulate religious activities. This law required all religious groups to register with the regime which had the power to approve or disapprove applications of churches to operate.⁵¹

Faced with the opposition from the HMCs, some military regimes sometimes found alternative in PMs which, for fear of regime brutality if they refused, cooperated with such regimes. It must be noted that such co-option was occasional and limited. That is to say, such military regimes did not co-opt these groups repeatedly, and neither did PMs engage political actors in a sustained manner prior to the era of the Fourth Republic. Nevertheless, occasional examples of cooperation with military regimes may be found. One such example involved the Prophet Charles Kobla Nutonuti Woveni of the Apostles' Revelation Society who was engaged by the National Liberation Council, the military group that overthrew Nkrumah's government in 1966. The mutineers sought Woveni's assistance because they believed rumours which suggested that Nkrumah had sought protection from a shrine in Larteh and a Muslim marabout from Guinea. Therefore, they wanted Woveni to help rededicate the seat of government through a special service of spiritual cleansing.⁵² Another example concerns the National Redemption Council (NRC) that overthrew the National Liberation Council in 1977. The NRC also turned to African independent church leaders, including the Rev. Abraham Ophel Philadelphus De-Love of the Philadelphia Mission (now Nations of God Mission Church), when it declared a National Week of Repentance and Prayer following a nationwide drought that caused a serious famine.⁵³

On one occasion, the same military regime enlisted the support of some PMs as sources of alternative spiritual legitimation to the HMCs that opposed them. For example, in 1977, in a bid to prop up support for a UNIGOV after the HMCs had expressed reservation about the proposal, the NRC co-opted churches like the Philadelphia Mission, Eden Church (led by Rev. Brother Charles Yeboah Korie) and the Bethany Mission (led by Rev. Dr Prince Blankson), who publicly supported the proposed UNIGOV.⁵⁴

From the above accounts, it is evident that the basic shape of Pentecostal political action in Ghana prior to the early 1990s was forced. It was not sustained engagement, nor was it the

⁵¹Africa Watch, "Ghana: Official Attacks on Religious Freedom," 4.

⁵²Atiemo, *Religion and Human Rights*, 88–89.

⁵³Atiemo, *Religion and Human Rights*, 91.

⁵⁴Pobee, *Religion and Politics in Ghana*, 111. See also Emmanuel Gyimah-Boadi, "Civil Society in Ghana," in *Civil Society and the State in Africa*, ed. John Willis Harbeson, Donald Rothchild and Naomi Chaza (Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1994), 128.; Casely B. Essamuah, "Speaking Truth to Power: Ghanaian Methodists' Public Witness 1960-2000," (Paper, 2007), 12.

⁵⁴Africa Watch, "Ghana," 22.

result of forward planning by the PMs. In contrast, the HMCs continuously engaged political actors in diverse ways, ranging from issuing communiqués on government policy, seeking audiences with political decision makers, and making public reprimands of government on issues of human rights and the political abuse of religion. Thus, this thesis contends that the sustained engagement of PMs with politics in Ghana only commenced at the inception of the Fourth Republic.

1.3.0 Pentecostalism in Ghana

Pentecostalism is now widely recognised as one of the largest streams within global Christianity. The Pentecostal movement is diverse as it is made up of numerous denominations, independent churches, and para-church organisations.⁵⁵ Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, a leading contemporary African interpreter of Pentecostalism,⁵⁶ defines PMs as Christians who:

Emphasise salvation in Christ as a transformative experience wrought by the Holy Spirit and in which pneumatic phenomena including ‘speaking in tongues’, prophecies, visions, healing and miracles in general, perceived as standing in historic continuity with the experiences of the early church as found especially in the Acts of the Apostles, are sought, accepted, valued, and consciously encouraged among members as signifying the presence of God and experiences of his Spirit.⁵⁷

The startling growth and diversity of Pentecostalism globally is also apparent in Africa, where the movement’s growth has been particularly dramatic since the era of decolonisation in the 1950s and 1960s. Currently, there are approximately 670 million Pentecostals globally with 114 million of these living in Africa.⁵⁸ The diversity and rapid growth of this stream of Christianity present problems when determining the boundaries of the movement even within a particular country like Ghana, like elsewhere, the movement emerged in different forms at different periods.⁵⁹ As noted above, Cephass Omenyo has put forward a helpful typology which identifies six broad strands that are commonly accepted as being Pentecostal and also accounts for the historical development of Pentecostal forms in Ghana. Thus, the analysis of the Fourth Republic era focuses on particular ministries within the mapping of Omenyo’s strands. These

⁵⁵ Pew Research, “Spirit and Power: A 10 Country Survey of Pentecostals” (Religion and Public Sphere Project, October 5, 2006), <http://www.pewforum.org/2006/10/05/overview-pentecostalism-in-africa/>.

⁵⁶ See foreword to: J.K. Asamoah-Gyadu, *Contemporary Pentecostal Christianity*, Wipf and Stock, 2013.

⁵⁷ J.K. Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics: Current Developments within Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2005), 12. See also Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, “Born of Water and the Spirit: Pentecostal/Charismatic Christianity in Africa,” in *African Christianity: An African Story*, ed. Ogbu Kalu (Pretoria: University of Pretoria Press, 2005), 389.

⁵⁸ Todd M. Johnson et al., “Christianity 2017: Five Hundred Years of Protestant Christianity,” *International Bulletin of Mission Research*, 2016, 9.

⁵⁹ Paul Gifford, *Christianity in Africa: Its Public Role* (London: Hurst and Company, 1998), 50. See also Birgit Meyer, “Praise the Lord’: Popular Cinema and Pentecostalist Style in Ghana’s New Public Sphere,” *American Ethnologist* 31, no. 1 (2004): 96.

six strands are: African Initiated Churches; Renewal Groups within the Historic Mission Churches; Classical Pentecostal ministries; Neo-Pentecostal ministries or Charismatic ministries; Para-Church groups or Non-Denominational Charismatic ministries and Neo-Prophetic ministries.

In all, six ministries and three umbrella organisations were studied. The ministries, which can be grouped into four strands of Pentecostalism, include two ministries each from CPMs (the Church of Pentecost and the Assemblies of God-Ghana), two CMs (Action Chapel International and the International Central Gospel Church) and one ministry each from Para-Church Groups (Ghana Evangelical Society) and NPMs (Glorious Word Power Ministries International). The three Pentecostal umbrella groups are the Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Council (GPCC), the National Association of Charismatic and Christian Churches (NACCC) and the Concerned Clergy Association of Ghana (CCAG).

1.3.1 The Church of Pentecost

The history of the Church of Pentecost (CoP) is linked to the ministry of Pastor James McKeown (1900-1989), an Irish missionary sent by the Apostolic Faith and Church Bradford (United Kingdom) to the then Gold Coast in 1937.⁶⁰ Differences between the Apostolic Church Gold Coast and its mother church in Bradford led to a split in 1953 which resulted in the formation of the Gold Coast Apostolic Church led by McKeown. In 1962, the church adopted the new name, the 'Church of Pentecost,' following disagreements with the Apostolic Faith over the use of its name.

The CoP is currently not only the largest Pentecostal Ministry, but also the biggest religious denomination in Ghana. The Church reported at its 15th Extraordinary Council Meeting in May 2017 that its overall worldwide membership is 2,804,861 (December 2016). The Church in Ghana had 2,367,283 members, 84.4% of the Church's total worldwide membership.⁶¹ The CoP has branches in 91 countries in Africa, America, South America, Europe, Asia and Australia.⁶²

The CoP believe in the divine inspiration and authority of the Holy Scriptures and teaches that the Bible is infallible in its declaration and is final in its authority, all-sufficient in

⁶⁰Church of Pentecost, "History of Church of Pentecost," Pentecost International Worship Centre, June 25, 2011, <http://piwctarkwa.org/about-us/history-of-church-of-pentecost.html>. Asamankes is located in the Eastern Region of Ghana.

⁶¹ See Opoku Onyinah, "Pastoral Letter to all Assemblies," June 1, 2017.

⁶² Girish Daswani, "Transformation and Migration among Members of a Pentecostal Church in Ghana and London," *Journal of Religion in Africa* 40 (2010): 444. See also Church of Pentecost, *37th Session of the General Council Meetings* (Accra: Pentecost Press Ltd, 2008).

its provisions and comprehensive in its sufficiency. This distinguishes the CoP from the CMs and NPMs who, though beliefs in the authority of the Bible, emphasis more on the gifts of the Holy Spirit and the prophetic word of the ‘Man of God,’ respectively. Like most CPMs, the CoP adheres to Apostle Paul’s admonition to Christians in Rome to subject themselves to all governing authorities because they have been established by God (Romans 13:1).⁶³ Thus the Church cooperates with all governments (either elected or authoritarian), supports their initiatives, and usually avoids any collision or confrontation with political actors.

1.3.2 Assemblies of God-Ghana

The main root of the Assemblies of God, Ghana (AoG-G), is traced to the Azusa Street revival. The focus of its originators, the Assemblies of God Foreign Mission Department (Missouri-United States) on evangelism, missions and church planting led to its ministry in the then Gold Coast in 1931.⁶⁴

Like other CPMs, the AoG-G believes that “the scriptures, both the Old and New Testaments, are verbally inspired by God and are the revelation of God to man, which is infallible and authoritative”.⁶⁵ They also believe in the baptism of the Holy Spirit which “all believers are entitled to and should ardently expect and earnestly seek.”⁶⁶ However, unlike most locally initiated CPMs like the CoP, the early AoG mission made social intervention and developmental projects an integral part of spreading the Gospel right from the beginnings of its ministry in West Africa. Therefore, like some HMCs, the AoG-G is credited for initiating the codification of local languages including the standardisation of Dagbani words, developing a grammar and dictionary, as well the translating the Bible into Dagbani.⁶⁷ They also undertook developmental projects including the provision of schools and health facilities.⁶⁸

The AoG-G, however, departs from the HMCs on how it engages political actors. While it has in recent decades spoken up on national issues, the Church, like other CPMs, usually

⁶³ Interview with Alfred Koduah, January 8, 2015.

⁶⁴ See Assemblies of God, Ghana, “History: Assemblies of God, Ghana,” <http://www.agghana.org/gchq/history.html>, n.d., accessed June 27, 2015.

⁶⁵ Assemblies of God, Ghana, “Constitution of Assemblies of God, Ghana” (Assemblies of God, Ghana, n.d.), 8, <http://www.agghana.org/gchq/constitution.html>.

⁶⁶ Assemblies of God, Ghana, 12.

⁶⁷ Assemblies of God World Missions, “History of Assemblies of God Missions in Ghana,” Ghana, accessed July 6, 2015, <http://agwmafrica.org/west-africa/ghana/>. Dagbani is the Ghanaian language spoken by Dagombas an ethnic group of northern Ghana. They were the first ethnic group, the mission evangelised.

⁶⁸ Larbi, *Pentecostalism in Ghana*, 73–74.

avoids confronting governments. On public issues, it typically defers to the collective position of the Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Council (GPCC), of which it is a founding member.⁶⁹

1.3.3 Action Chapel International

Like most NPMs in Ghana, the Action Chapel International (ACI) is a first generation church. Founded in 1979, the ACI was the first Charismatic Ministry to be established in Ghana after the initiator, Nicholas Duncan-Williams, returned from his Biblical Studies scholarship programme at the All Nations for Christ Bible Institute in Benin City, Nigeria, in 1977.⁷⁰

The Prayer Cathedral, the headquarters of the Church, has a seating capacity of about 8000.⁷¹ ACI also has other branches across the country and claims that 250 churches across North America, Europe, Asia and Africa are affiliated to it.⁷² ACI has a mission to train and develop Christ-like disciples in their God-given gifts and callings and has the vision to make Christ known throughout the world through the multiplication of ‘Action churches.’ Like most NPMs, the church emphasises intercessory prayer, which it insists must be a believer’s ‘life-line’ and ‘life-style.’

Duncan-Williams, the founder, is said to have an intense passion for intercession and strategic prayer for several nations.⁷³ Through his intercession, he often deliberately engages political actors. This form of relationship with the political distinguishes the ACI from other PMs, especially CPMs, whose leaders rarely have personal relations with political actors.

Like other locally initiated CMs, the social intervention of ACI is recent in comparison with the HMCs and CPMs that have been around for most of Ghana’s history. Nonetheless, the ACI, in pursuance of its value of demonstrating compassion to humanity, runs a drug rehabilitation centre and operates four orphanages, among other ministries.⁷⁴

⁶⁹ Interview with John Bando Ghartey, January 9, 2015.

⁷⁰ Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, “Half a Century of Touching Lives: Nigerian Charismatic Personalities and African (Ghanaian) Christianity (1953-2003),” in *Communities of Faith in Africa and the African Diaspora*, ed. Casely B. Essamuah and David K. Ngaruiya (Oregon: Pickwick Publications, 2003), 238. The Bible School he attended was the initiative of Archbishop Benson Idahosa founder of the Church of God Mission International

⁷¹ Jane E. Soothill, *Gender, Social Change and Spiritual Power: Charismatic Christianity in Ghana* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 2. See also Eric MacLean and Ntiamoah Duah, *Accra City Guide: The Indispensable Companion* (Bloomington: Author House, 2012), 100.

⁷² Action Chapel International Ministry, “About,” Action Worship Centre, 2010, <http://www.awclaurel.org/about-2>.

⁷³ Action Chapel International Ministry, “The Archbishop,” Action Worship Centre, 2010, <http://www.awclaurel.org/ab-nicholas-duncan-williams>.

⁷⁴ Interview with Josephine Taylor, April 29, 2015.

1.3.4 International Central Gospel Church

The International Central Gospel Church (ICGC) which was founded by Mensa Otabil was officially inaugurated on February 26, 1984.⁷⁵ Unlike most CPMs, which were initiated in the hinterlands, the ICGC started in Ghana's capital city, Accra, as did many other CMs. The ICGC currently claims it is host to over 450 network churches and preaching points in other parts of Ghana and elsewhere in Africa, Europe, the United States of America and Canada.

Like many PMs, the ICGC believes that the Bible is the inspired word of God and the final authority in all matters of their belief and practice. While it emphasises the Holy Spirit and His gifting, it distinguishes itself consciously from other CMs in the emphasis it accords to these gifts. The Church's rhetoric promotes a balance of spiritual power with personal "character", which it refers to in terms of "fruit of the Spirit." As will be explored further in this study, this belief is central to Otabil's ministry. The ICGC believes it has "received a mandate from God to raise leaders, impart and shape visions, and influence society through Christ, with the principles enshrined in the word of God". As part of its social programmes, the church, in 1988, instituted an educational scholarship scheme "to finance the education of selected needy students in pre-tertiary educational institutions."⁷⁶ The scheme has over the years grown to become the largest non-governmental scholarship programme for students in pre-tertiary institutions in Ghana.

1.3.5 Ghana Evangelical Society

The Ghana Evangelical Society (GES) was started by Enoch Immanuel Amanor Agbozo in 1973 but was officially inaugurated in 1977. Unlike other para-church groups, the GES combines evangelism with social and political advocacy. This focus is based on the prophetic claim of Agbozo of having received a mandate from God to spiritually "rebuild the broken walls of Ghana."⁷⁷ In his desire to fulfil this mandate, Agbozo has had various engagements with political actors and regimes since the overthrow of the Second Republican government in 1972.⁷⁸

⁷⁵ Brigid M. Sackey, *New Directions in Gender and Religion: The Changing Status of Women in African Independent Churches* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2006), 34. See also International Central Gospel Church, "History: International Central Gospel Church," <http://www.centralgospel.com/?root=about&t=55>, n.d., accessed July 4, 2015.

⁷⁶ Kofi Otabil, "International Central Gospel Church Is 30 Years," *Sankofa*, February 26, 2014, <http://sankofaonline.com/international-central-gospel-church-is-30-years/>.

⁷⁷ Interview with Emmanuel Agbozo, 10 March 2015.

⁷⁸ Samuel Brefo Adubofour, "Evangelic Parachurch Movements in Ghanaian Christianity: C. 1950-Early 1990s." (Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1994), 310.

Agbozo's political prophecies remain some of the oldest forms of political engagement within the political sphere. Yet they are distinguishable from the current trend of 'divine prediction' prophecies that focus on political events and happenings. While contemporary 'divine prediction' prophecies are broad based and overarching, Agbozo's prophecies are specific in focus: to reverse the evil spiritual force ('Accursed Thing') which the first President of Ghana drove the nation into, and to bring the nation back to God's presence.⁷⁹

1.3.6 Glorious Word Power Ministries International

The Glorious Word Power Ministries International (GWPMI), formerly End Time Ministries International, was initiated in Accra in 1996 by Prophet Isaac Owusu Bempah. The founder claims he had his first religious experience at the age of 14, but did not initially understand his prophetic gift as prophet to the nation, Ghana and beyond until he was prophesied to by Rev. Francis Akwasi Amoako, at whose crusade he became born again.⁸⁰

It is worth noting here that Bempah can be considered the forerunner of the shift from the Christian engagement through prophetic declarations concerning current issues to 'divine prediction' of the future. By leading this shift, he has been a key figure in the renewed efforts of Ghanaian PMs to cement and sustain the spiritualisation of political discourse generally.

1.3.7 Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Council

Founded initially as a fellowship of Pentecostal groups in Ghana in 1969, the Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Council (GPCC) has gone through three name changes to reflect its changing focus over the years. As of 2015, the Council was the umbrella body of over 200 Pentecostal and Charismatic denominations in Ghana. The GPCC claims to represent over four million of the adult Christians in Ghana.⁸¹

The 2003 Constitution of the Council indicates among the three-fold vision of the Council, its commitment to "demonstrate the love of God to humanity through the provision of social services (Matthew 25:34-40; Acts 9:41)"⁸² and a strategy to "influence national, spiritual and socio-political issues (through) the maintenance of high standards of Christian principles and ethics among member churches."⁸³

⁷⁹ Interview with Emmanuel Agbozo, 10 March 2015.

⁸⁰ TV3, "Exclusive Interview with Rev. Owusu Bempah," *New Day*, 1 March 2015.

⁸¹ Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Council, "Terms of Reference for Consultants to Develop a Five-Year Strategic Plan 2015-2019" (Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Council, 2015), 1, <http://gpccghana.org/TOR-%20GPCC%20STRATEGIC%20PLAN.pdf>.

⁸² Ghana Pentecostal Council, "Ghana Pentecostal Council Constitution," 7.

⁸³ Ghana Pentecostal Council, 7.

Unlike HMCs, but as representative of the firm belief of the founding churches, the GPCC does not ordinarily question the authority of governments, legitimate or illegitimate, elected or forced. The Council is of the view that all governments exist because God has permitted them to rule. Thus, it co-operates with, works and prays for all governments.⁸⁴ Nonetheless, the GPCC over the years has either acted alone or in collaboration with the CCG, the GCBC and other civil society organisations in engaging political actors on issues of national concern. The GPCC was given formal representation in the Consultative Assembly that sat on the future political system for Ghana in 1990.

1.3.8 National Association of Charismatic and Christian Churches

The National Association of Charismatic and Christian Churches (NACCC) is the main religious, and in more recent years, the political mouthpiece of the CMs in Ghana. Formed in December 1999 through the vision of Bishop Dag-Heward Mills (Founder of Light House Chapel International), the NACCC had membership of over 250 churches as of 2011. Although the majority of CMs are members of NACC, there are still others, mainly the bigger and older CMs like Royal House Chapel, ACI and Perez Chapel, who still remain members of GPCC. This double association is made possible because both NACCC and the GPCC have as one of their main objects – to collaborate with other churches and Christian groups.⁸⁵

During the leadership of Dag-Heward Mills and Steve Mensah, the NACCC was not politically active. It was during the chairpersonship of Duncan-Williams (2012-present) that the association increased its interest in political issues. This is in part due to Duncan-Williams's existing relations with political actors in Ghana. A key activity on the calendar of the Association is the organisation of all night prayer vigils to intercede on behalf of Ghana.⁸⁶ Intercessory prayer is one of the forms of Ghanaian Pentecostal engagement with politics that is explored further in this study.

1.3.9 Concerned Clergy Association of Ghana

The Concerned Clergy Association of Ghana (CCAG) was formed with two main objects, namely to advocate for independent churches, who may become victims of state interference and abuses and to speak on national issues.⁸⁷ Formed in 2006 with Bishop Prince Benny Wood

⁸⁴ Interview with Opoku Onyinah, January 21, 2015; Interview with Samuel Antwi, January 22, 2015.

⁸⁵ Ghana Pentecostal Council, "Ghana Pentecostal Council Constitution" (Ghana Pentecostal Council, 2003), 4.

⁸⁶ Interview with Gideon Titi-Ofei, February 10, 2015.

⁸⁷ Interview with Prince Benny Wood, January 23, 2015.

as its spokesperson, the Association has been outspoken on a number of contentious national issues including the discourse on same-sex marriage and state support for religious activities.

The CCAG usually takes different stands on a number of political issues which NACCC and GPCC normally agree with. This is as a result of the CCAG's firm conviction that the older and bigger Christian bodies have over the years been diplomatic or very partisan and have been compromised as a result.⁸⁸ The Association can be credited as one of the PMs bringing innovation into Pentecostal engagement with politics, especially by pushing moral issues to the centre of national discourse and taking the initiative to force the hands of government to declare its position on matters that affect Christians.

1.4.0 The Thesis

This study assesses the post-1992 era as a period of transition, which coincided with the growth of Pentecostalism. More importantly, the period witnessed a significant shift in the Pentecostal mode of political activism. The central argument of this thesis is that PMs in Ghana have transitioned from an 'enclave' community to one of sustained political engagement. This transition, fostered by an appealing theology of spiritual causality, has witnessed the development of a distinctive prophetic politics focussed on what is often referred to in African Pentecostal parlance as "divining"; that is, 'divine prediction' about happenings in the nation particularly those pertaining to the outcomes of elections and consequences of political decisions. At the same time, the present democratic era (1993-present) has also enabled the broadening of the Pentecostal scope of political interface from spiritual politics to encompass other traditional (otherworldly) modes of engagement. This includes public advocacy and interventions in the economy which promote political accountability and complement state efforts respectively.

Scholars like Paul Gifford have characterised PMs as leaning towards spiritualising politics. He has noted that the Pentecostal worldview makes them "tend in particular to think in terms of spiritual causality,"⁸⁹ which led them "to 'spiritualise' or 'moralise' issues out of the mundane plane on which political issues had been most fruitfully addressed."⁹⁰ That is to say, most of the leaders of the Pentecostal groupings in the country were not actively engaged

⁸⁸ Wood.

⁸⁹ Paul Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity: Pentecostalism in a Globalizing African Economy* (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2004), 161.

⁹⁰ Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity*, 169.

in politics as they paid more attention to their ministries, particularly evangelism and the planting of churches.

However, a current assessment of engagement shows a shift from their focus on evangelism and church planting to taking an interest in direct political activity. The change in Pentecostal engagement with politics in Ghana during the Fourth Republic can best be described as both continuity and rupture in political engagement. In the light of this, it is no longer adequate to deem Pentecostal political engagement as merely spiritualising politics. Doing so gives too little credence to the shift and novelty of Pentecostal engagements that have occurred during this era. Therefore, this study takes Gifford's view as a point of departure, and proposes that current Pentecostal engagement with politics in Ghana entails both continuity and discontinuity.

This thesis identifies the introduction of a new form of spiritualising politics and the widening scope of Pentecostal engagement with political actors, alongside other more traditional modes of engagement. On the one hand, there is a shift from the previous provision of 'spiritual cleansing' of the state (as explored in the introduction to this chapter) to a 'divine prediction' of future political happenings. This represents a break with one form of spiritual politics (rupture) to embracing another (continuity). On the other hand, this era has also witnessed a shift from the Pentecostal analyses of almost every political issue in spiritual terms (rupture) to include established non-spiritual/profane modes of interfacing with the political sphere albeit with some innovations (continuity). In essence, the present developments are 'new' and 'normal' at the same time because in one breath, Pentecostal actors have introduced a novel form of engagement with politics ('divine predictions'), albeit within the same realm of spiritualising politics. In another breath, they have embraced with some innovations, established modes of engagement with politics including interventions in Ghana's democracy and the economy.

Consequently, in examining Pentecostal engagement with politics, the study focuses on Pentecostal innovations. In some instances, this innovation involves replication of modes of political engagement that have already been employed by other religious groups, especially the HMCs. Here, the study focuses on two key areas: Pentecostal participation in the democratic process, and Pentecostal interventions in the economic activities in Ghana. Subsequently, the study examines the distinctive Pentecostal innovation in terms of political engagement: that is, through 'divine predictions.'

The value of ordering the study in this way is to allow a distinction between engagements with politics that are currently exclusive to PMs and those engagements that are

common to other religious groups. This ordering is also in line with answering the key research question which is focused on investigating if there is a new and distinctive Pentecostal political engagement that is different from that of the HMCs and from its own past.

1.5.0 Conceptual Approaches

The notion of ‘sustained political engagement’ is one of the key concepts employed in this study. There is no one acceptable definition of this concept, because scholars disagree on the scope of what constitutes or counts as ‘political engagement.’⁹¹ While some have advocated a broad conceptualisation to encompass a range of interfaces,⁹² others have argued for sharply defined boundaries to avoid unnecessary stretching of the concept.⁹³ In this thesis, the term will be used in two ways. First, it is used to convey Pentecostal responses and initiative in relation to what they perceive as a discrete and quite separate political sphere; and second, it incorporates Pentecostal activities within the political sphere of which they are an increasingly integral part, where they hope to have influence and impact. In other words, a key dimension of sustained political engagement is not simply that PMs’ political activity increased (dramatically) during the Fourth Republic, but also that it changed in style and tone. In particular, it became less characteristically reactive but more pro-active and deliberate, and framed more definitely by the PMs’ own agendas.

An opposite concept to the above is ‘enclave.’ Enclave is used in this thesis to explain the lack of Pentecostal interest in political engagement before the Fourth Republican period. This understanding encompasses both the absence of any engagement, and the episodic and or occasional engagements in which PMs were coerced by military regimes to take part in political activity – and not necessarily initiated through the agency of the PMs.

The notion of ‘politics’ is conceptualised in broad terms, as canvassed by Harri Englund, who has proposed a “conceptual shift from politics to publics.”⁹⁴ The salience of thinking about politics in broad terms reflects “the socio-political design of Pentecostal

⁹¹ See Patrick J. Cong, “Review Article: The Concept of Political Participation Toward a Definition,” *Comparative Politics* 20, no 2 (1988): 241-249.

⁹² Sidney Verba and Norman H. Nie, *Participation in America: Political Democracy and Social Equality* (New York: Harper and Row, 1972) 10, no. 38 (1970): 230.

⁹³ Samuel H. Barnes, Max Kaase et al., *Political Action: Mass Participation in Five Western Democracies*, (Beverly Hills: Sage), 1.

⁹⁴ Harri Englund, “Introduction: Rethinking African Christianities Beyond the Religion-Politics Conundrum,” in *In Christianity and Public Culture in Africa*, ed. Harri Englund (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2011), 8.

theology and belief,”⁹⁵ which goes beyond institutional or more definite/formal framing of politics. This study goes beyond Pentecostal participation in the formal process of politics (electoral politics, mediating political conflicts and issuing of communiques) to encompass issues of spiritual power, political prophecies and the messianic hopes. This broad approach informs this study’s choosing of a concept that captures the “political dimension of African Pentecostalism with an analytical framework of public spheres and not just institutional politics”.⁹⁶

I have already indicated in the introduction to this chapter that the study focuses on six PMs and three umbrella organisations. While these ministries are not necessarily representative of all the PMs in Ghana, they constitute a significant segment of this stream of Christianity in Ghana. Though the study refers to specific strands, leaders and actors where necessary, the term ‘Pentecostal Ministries’ is also applied when making general reference to all of these strands collectively. This term is employed because it is more encompassing than the term ‘Pentecostal Churches’: not all the strands under consideration are churches. In the case of political groupings, a range of parties and actors are addressed, but the two key political parties for the study are Ghana’s two largest ones: the National Democratic Congress and the New Patriotic Party.

Key actors feature prominently because most of the selected churches in this study are first generational ministries whose founders’ views and political interventions are critical in shaping and projecting their ministries’ engagements. Politically, Ghana practices an executive presidency which gives enormous power to a sitting president including the nomination of the heads of the other two arms of government, the judiciary and legislature. As a consequence, almost all government decisions and policy interventions are based on the vision and aspiration of a sitting president and his ministers. Therefore, actors of the executive presidency (and not necessarily existing state institutions that they superintend) are the target of most religious engagements with the political sphere. In a nutshell, the interface between prominent Pentecostal leaders and political elites at the national level will be our preoccupation.

⁹⁵ Andreas Heuser, “Encoding Caesar’s Realm – Variants of Spiritual Warfare Politics in Africa,” in *Pentecostalism in Africa: Presence and Impact of Pneumatic Christianity in Postcolonial Societies*, ed. Martin Lindhardt (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 270.

⁹⁶ Heuser, 270.

1.6.0 Sources and Methods

The research and analysis of this study are based on both primary and secondary sources. The primary data were drawn from a variety of sources including archival materials, policy documents of governments, the constitution of Ghana, and statements by churches and their affiliate umbrella groups.

The archival materials which included colonial documents relating to the encounter between specifically the British governments and some Pentecostal missionary and church groups were crucial in establishing the background to how Pentecostal engagement with the political sphere started, what trends have developed over time, and how these trends have shaped Pentecostal encounter with politics over the years. The constitutions of churches and their affiliate bodies were important as they provided the basis for the establishment of the churches, their objects and how they expected to relate to the secular sphere. The policy documents of governments were also helpful because they provided a framework and the economic context in which PMs intervene in political issues, either to complement the state's efforts or to advocate changes.

Some primary data were also accessed from media sources. These sources can be grouped into two main parts; namely, those generated by media outlets, and those produced by the Pentecostal ministries. The former included radio and television interviews and newspaper publications. The latter was made up of press releases, communiqués, recorded audio and video messages/sermons, audio, and video live streams as well as printed books of Pentecostal leaders. The media data generated by media houses were an essential source because Ghanaian media gives considerable attention to the connections between religion and politics. Media sources consulted included the *Daily Graphic* (state owned), *Ghanaian Times* (state owned), *Daily Guide*, (private) and the *Ghanaian Chronicle* (private). The study also utilised interviews granted by Pentecostal leaders to prominent private radio stations like Joy FM and Citi FM which transmit in the English language, as well as Peace FM and Adom FM that transmit in Twi.⁹⁷ These stations were chosen because they give considerable coverage to the particular PMs which are the main focus of this study. Secondly, these stations were chosen because they give relatively equal and fair coverage to political issues relating to the two main political parties.

⁹⁷ Twi is spoken by the Akans in Ghana and is the most dominate Ghanaian language spoken. The Akans are the largest ethnic group constituting 48.1 of the Ghanaian population (See 2010 Population and Housing Census of Ghana)

The media data produced by PMs were also essential because CMs and Para-Church groups in particular have harnessed media technologies, creating an enormous output of widely-consumed media content. This includes material addressing socio-political interventions, particularly those focused on the main actors of the churches who are the main focus of this study.

Many past and contemporary messages of Pentecostal leaders (audio and video), and live-streamed events were accessed from YouTube, currently the most popular video sharing site on the internet. Messages and sermons of Pentecostal leaders, some dating back more than a decade, are available on this site. YouTube proved to be a good source for assessing the political orientation of these PMs, and for tracing changes. These preaching sources were particularly useful because, until recently, Pentecostal leaders' political stances could only be discerned through their sermons, because they were not actively engaged in more public forms of political intervention.⁹⁸

In addition to these sources, I conducted semi-structured interviews with Pentecostal leaders, agents and political actors. In all, actors in six PMs, three Pentecostal umbrella groups and two main political parties were interviewed.⁹⁹ The ministries were selected for three main reasons: their size, the extent of their political activism, and their representativeness of strand differences within Ghanaian Pentecostalism. On the other hand, the political parties were selected because they have had considerable engagements with Pentecostal actors and groups since the inception of the Fourth Republic. This engagement reflects the fact that they are the two main political groups that have been in government or constitute the largest opposition during the era under consideration.

1.7.0 Thesis Overview

The study is organised as follows: 3 chapters are dedicated to analysing Pentecostal politics in Ghana. Chapter 3, the first of these, focuses on how PMs are participating and influencing the democratic process in Ghana. In particular, it examines how Pentecostal leaders are engaged in electoral politics, settlement of political disputes as well as their distinctive approach and propositions on dealing with contentious issues like same-sex relations and legalisation, the conflict between indigenous laws and national laws, and qualifications for political leadership. The chapter argues that while PMs are embracing established forms of religious engagement

⁹⁸ Interview with Samuel Antwi.

⁹⁹ See appendix for full details of the Pentecostal and political actors who were interviewed for this study.

with politics, they are nonetheless introducing innovative ways as well as taking advantage of the guaranteed rights in the constitution to re-negotiate others in their favour.

Chapter 4 examines Pentecostal interventions in key sectors of the Ghanaian economy. Comparing the current Ghanaian economic policy document (Ghana's Shared Growth and Development Agenda) with Pentecostal interventions in the areas of economic activities, social protection and economic advocacy, the chapter contends that these initiatives, whether targeted or not are complementing the government's efforts. They align with the economic and developmental goals and strategy of Ghana. In particular, the chapter advocates a re-examination of the scholarly views of Paul Gifford, on whether Pentecostal teachings on prosperity and an enchanted worldview can transform the structure of a neo-liberal economy like that of Ghana. The chapter does not dispute Gifford's conclusions, but uses the three interventions outlined above to demonstrate that his analysis has limitations.

Chapter 5 analyses the development of 'divine prediction' as a novel spiritual mode of Pentecostal political engagement in Ghana. Using this form as a case study, the chapter demonstrates how spiritual engagement with politics in Ghana has shifted. The chapter also analyses how the contradictions, contest and conflicts over 'divine prediction' erode confidence in Pentecostal spirituality and potential to create political instability.

Through the exploration of Pentecostal political theology, Chapter 6 interprets the understandings of Pentecostal practices discussed in the previous three chapters. The chapter focuses on the political theologies of the Classical Pentecostal and Charismatic Ministries. This interpretative chapter provides a deeper account of Pentecostal political engagements and opens up new ways of understanding and explaining underlying motivations, mobilisations and changing positions, both in response to political developments and in initiating Pentecostal political agendas.

Chapter 7 examines why and how the new Pentecostal interest in politics emerged. It explains the factors responsible for the Pentecostal enclave, and what occasioned the shift to sustained political engagement. The chapter contends that both religious and political factors, in particular the growth of PMs and Ghana's transition from military to democratic rule, are mainly responsible for the new Pentecostal interest in politics post 1992.

A concluding chapter (8) confirms the shift from enclave to engagement and assesses the significance of this new Pentecostal mode of engagement with politics in Ghana, as well as a range of implications arising from the present study's contribution to the scholarly debate about religion and politics in Ghana.

In summary, the study that follows examines a new and distinctive form of Pentecostal engagement with politics during the Fourth Republic which blends both the Pentecostal past in causality and other secular forms or modes of engagement with politics. This shift is a mixed bag of rupture and continuity. The study suggests that PMs' engagements with politics can no longer be explained wholly, or even primarily, in spiritual terms, as an outworking of Pentecostal dualistic theology. Modes of political engagement have changed and diversified too much during the Fourth Republic for mono-causal explanations of Pentecostal engagement with politics in Ghana to remain satisfactory.

Chapter 2, which follows, provides a scholarly contextualisation of the study, which helps to explain the significance of this study's interpretation. It also clarifies the central argument of transition from enclave to sustained engagement, and highlights certain current debates in the various areas where PMs are interfacing with politics.

CHAPTER 2: PENTECOSTALS AND POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT

Despite the undoubted importance of Pentecostalism in Africa's religious landscapes, little has been written about its political importance, in striking contrast to the plentiful literature on Pentecostalism in Latin America. This shows the powerful effect of theory, which has ascribed an apolitical role to African Pentecostalism in the context of postcolonial development. Yet African Pentecostalism is raising increasing claims. ...so that a political theology of African Pentecostalism can be identified.... Pentecostal concepts are shifting from institutionalized levels of politics into public discourses and can gradually become culturally hegemonic in the country concerned ... From their beginnings in urban areas, they have shifted into national discourses and will codetermine future political discourses (Andreas Heuser, 2012).

2.0.0 Introduction

The observation above, by Andrews Heuser in 2012,¹⁰⁰ coincided with the call for papers for a special issue in *Nova Religio: The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions* which was edited by the same scholar and later published in February 2015. I was not able to contribute to this special issue, though I did present a conference paper on a related topic soon after in 2013.¹⁰¹ Nevertheless, this call for papers profoundly informed my PhD research. This study presents an opportunity to present the Ghanaian side of a Pentecostal shift from 'enclave to engagement' which, as the papers in the special issue demonstrate, was evidently taking place albeit in different ways and forms in other African countries, such as Nigeria, the Ivory Coast and Zambia.¹⁰²

Although Pentecostalism has attracted considerable scholarly attention, including its emergence, spread, ethos,¹⁰³ and implications for other religious groups,¹⁰⁴ and its overall

¹⁰⁰ Andreas Heuser, "A Political Theology for an African Pentecostalism? Or from the Grievous End to a Grand Narrative," *Schweizerische Zeitschrift Fur Religions- Und Kulturgeschichte* 106 (2012): 303.

¹⁰¹ Fredrick Acheampong, "Lost and Discovered Voices? Christian Leadership Leverage in Ghana's 4th Republic," paper presented at an International Conference on *Revisiting the First International Congress of Africanists in a Globalised World* held at the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, Legon, 2013.

¹⁰² See especially the papers of Andreas Heuser (General survey and Introduction), Richard Burgess and Musa A. B. Gaiya (Nigeria) and Konstanze N'Guessan (Ivory Coast) February 2015 edition of *Nova Religio*.

¹⁰³ Larbi, *Pentecostalism in Ghana*; Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*. See also Birgit Meyer, "Impossible Representations: Pentecostalism, Vision and Video Technology in Ghana" (Mainz: Department of Anthropology and African Studies, Gutenberg University, 2003); Birgit Meyer, "Commodities and the Power of Prayer: Pentecostalist Attitudes Towards Consumption in Contemporary Ghana," *Development and Change* 29 (1998): 751–76; Emmanuel Kingsley Larbi, "The Nature of Continuity and Discontinuity of the Ghanaian Pentecostal Concept of Salvation in African Cosmology," *Cyberjournal for Pentecostal-Charismatic Research*, n.d., <http://www.pctii.org/cyberj10/larbi.html>; Abraham Akropong, "The 'Born Again' Concept in the Charismatic Movement in Ghana," *Evangelical Review of Theology* 35, no. 1 (2011): 31–40.

¹⁰⁴ Elom Dovlo, "Studying New Religious Movements & New Churches In Ghana," *African Association for the Study of Religions-News Letter* 18 (November 2002): 4–8; Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, "The Sri Sathya Sai Baba Movement & the Churches in Ghana," *African Association for the Study of Religions-News Letter* 18 (November 2002): 9–21. See also Cephas Omenyo, *Pentecost outside Pentecostalism*; Cephas Omenyo, "From the Fringes to the Centre: Pentecostalization of the Mainline Churches in Ghana," *Exchange* 34, no. 1 (2005): 39–62; Elom Dovlo, "The Church in Africa and Religious Pluralism: The Challenge of New Religious Movements and Charismatic Churches," *Exchange* 27, no. 1 (1998): 53–69.

impact on evangelism,¹⁰⁵ the analysis of Pentecostal engagement with politics is very much at the construction phase.¹⁰⁶ This is because scholars have characterised the Pentecostal movement as being essentially apolitical. Such characterisations framed assumptions about the movement and this provides one of the reasons for the initial lack of scholarly interest. Indeed, it has been established by Birgit Meyer in the case of Ghana that prior to the early 1990s, Pentecostal leaders were not active participants in Ghana's public sphere, especially in direct political activities.¹⁰⁷ They "were content to operate within a strictly religious sphere."¹⁰⁸

Another reason for the lack of interest has been the bias of early scholars like Kwesi Dickson and Christian G. Baëta, who were also key members and leaders of the older Christian groups in Ghana, the Historic Mission Churches (HMCs).¹⁰⁹ This group of scholars regarded Pentecostalism as a fringe fundamentalist religion that was not competent to understand the complexities involved in politics. By contrast, the HMCs, which have been described as active participants, influencing political decisions and partnering governments in the provision of social services, have attracted more scholarship in terms of interactions of religion and politics.¹¹⁰ Initial scholarly works on Christianity and politics in colonial and postcolonial Africa were skewed towards the HMCs.

This chapter offers a review of Pentecostal engagement with politics. Its focuses on how scholars have characterised Pentecostal interactions in the political sphere, how such characterisations inform this study, and how this study builds on these works. This review is important in distinguishing this study from others. The chapter also provides analysis of

¹⁰⁵Kwabena J. Darkwa Amanor, "Pentecostalism in Ghana: An African Reformation," *Cyberjournal for Pentecostal-Charismatic Research*, accessed April 10, 2014, <http://www.pctii.org/cyberj/cyberj13/amanor.html>.

¹⁰⁶Allan Anderson et al., "Introduction to Studying Global Pentecostalism: Theories and Methods," in *Studying Global Pentecostalism: Theories and Methods*, ed. Allan Anderson et al. (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2010), 5. See also Andreas Heuser, "Disjunction-Conjunction-Disillusionment: African Pentecostalism and Politics," *Nova Religio: The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions* 18, no. 3 (2015): 9.

¹⁰⁷Birgit Meyer, "The Power of Money: Politics, Occult Forces and Pentecostalism in Ghana," *African Studies Review* 41, no. 3 (1998): 27.

¹⁰⁸Meyer, "Praise the Lord," 96.

¹⁰⁹See Kwesi Dickson, "The Church and the Quest for Democracy in Ghana," in *The Christian Churches and the Democratization of Africa*, ed. Paul Gifford (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 261–75; Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, "God Bless Our Homeland Ghana: Religion and Politics in a Post-Colonial African State," in *Trajectories of Religion in Africa: Essays in Honour of John S. Pobee*, ed. Omenyo, Cephas and Anum Eric B., 48th ed., Studies in World Christianity and Interreligious Relations (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2014), 174–175.

¹¹⁰Some of works are The Christian Council of Ghana, "The Church in Collaboration with the Civil Society for Development," in *The Role of the Church Towards Ghana's Development* (Accra: Christian Council of Ghana, 1997), 78–95; Pobee, *Religion and Politics in Ghana*; John Pobee, "Religion and Politics in Ghana, 1972-1978: Some Case Studies from the Rule of General I. K. Acheampong," *Journal of Religion in Africa* 17, no. 1 (1987): 44–62; ; Dickson, "Religion and Society: A Study of Church and State Relations in the First Republic"; Aboagye-Mensah, *Mission and Democracy in Africa: The Role of the Church*. See also Elom Dovlo, "Religion and Politics in Ghana's Presidential Elections," *Uhuru Magazine*, January 1993; Dovlo, "Religion and Politics in Africa: The Ghanaian Case"; Elom Dovlo, "Religion and the Politics of Fourth Republican Elections in Ghana (1992, 1996)," *Ghana Bulletin of Theology* 1, no. 1 (2006): 3–19.

debates on the key areas of Pentecostal emphasis, the strategies employed, and structures used in these engagements.

2.1.0 Scholarly Contextualisation of Pentecostals and Politics: Global and Local

Globally, academic research on Pentecostalism began in the 1950s and gathered pace in the 1980s.¹¹¹ With this interest came the emergence of new ways to study more explicit forms of Pentecostal engagement with the political.¹¹² Since then there have been various works published in Africa and in other parts of the Global South (Latin America and Asia), most of which focus on the Pentecostal shift from spiritualising politics to engaging it in more direct ways.¹¹³

In the specific case of Africa, scholars trace the change in the Pentecostal attitude towards politics to the late 1980s, around the same time many African nations were returning to democracy having experienced military and authoritarian regimes in the first three decades after independence from colonial domination.¹¹⁴ In Ghana, for instance, scholars have noted the change and report that this shift occurred in the early 1990s, coinciding with the beginning of the Fourth Republican era of Ghana's political history. Since then, PMs have taken a keen interest in political issues.¹¹⁵ In Emmanuel Kingsley Larbi's words, PMs have "moved beyond their sole focus on church affairs and the private life of church members and ventured into

¹¹¹ Anderson et al., "Introduction to Studying Global Pentecostalism: Theories and Methods," 4.

¹¹² Amos Yong, *In the Days of Caesar: Pentecostalism and Political Theology* (Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2010), 7.

¹¹³ Douglas Petersen, *Not By Might Nor By Power: A Pentecostal Theology of Social Concern in Latin America* (Oxford: Regnum Books International, 1996); Ogbu U. Kalu, "Faith and Politics in Africa: Emergent Political Theology of Engagement in Nigeria" (Paul B. Henry Lecture, Paul Henry Institute, Calvin College, 2003); Isabelle V. Barker, "Charismatic Economies: Pentecostalism, Economic Restructuring, and Social Reproduction," *New Political Science* 29, no. 4 (2007): 407–27; Donald E. Miller and Tetsunao Yamamori, *Global Pentecostalism: The New Face of Christian Social Engagement* (California: University of California Press, 2007); Yong, *In the Days of Caesar*; Richard Burgess, "Family Networks and Social Engagement: Pentecostal Responses to Street Children and Youth in Lagos, Nigeria," *PentecoStudies* 10, no. 2 (2011): 196–214; Richard Flory and Donald Miller, "The Dream Center: Spirit-Infused and Socially Engaged Urban Ministry," *PentecoStudies* 12, no. 1 (2012): 9–26; Richard Burgess, "Nigerian Pentecostalism and Civic Engagement: Mission in the Midst of Poverty and Violence," *Amended Paper Theological Education in Africa Conference*, 2012, 29–42; Dena Freeman, ed., *Pentecostalism and Development: Churches, NGOs and Social Change in Africa*, Non-Governmental Public Action Series (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012); Richard Burgess, "Pentecostals and Development in Nigeria and Zambia: Community Organizing as a Response to Poverty and Violence," *PentecoStudies* 14, no. 2 (2015): 176–204.

¹¹⁴ Heuser, "Disjunction–Conjunction–Disillusionment," 8.

¹¹⁵ See Birgit Meyer, "Pentecostlite Culture on Screen Magic and Modernity in Ghana's New Mediascape" (Research Centre Religion and Society, University of Amsterdam, 2002), <http://faculty.history.wisc.edu/bernault/magical/public.3.htm>; Meyer, "Praise the Lord," 96–97; Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity*; Fredrick Acheampong, "Religion and Politics in Ghana's 4th Republican Elections (1992–2008)" (Unpublished MPhil Thesis: University of Ghana, 2010), 154. See also Vlas Natalia and Sav Simona, "Pentecostalism and Politics: Global and European Perspectives," *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies* 13, no. 37 (2014): 164.; Maxwell, "Pentecostals and Politics in Zimbabwe"; Yong, "Renewing the Public Square II"; Yong, "Pentecostalism and the Political."

debates about the state of the nation.”¹¹⁶ Since then, research has investigated a number of areas, including Pentecostalism and democracy,¹¹⁷ PMs and socio-economic engagement,¹¹⁸ comparative studies of Pentecostal engagement with politics across continents,¹¹⁹ as well as assessment of Pentecostal political interventions compared with those of other religions.¹²⁰

Nonetheless, limitations remained. In a comparison of African and Latin American engagement with politics in 2001, Paul Freston advocated country-level macro institutional studies to fill the gap between anthropological micro-studies and continent-wide generalisations, to help scholars appreciate how Pentecostal politics is actually developing.¹²¹ He identified Ghana, Zambia and Zimbabwe as potential countries for such contextual study of Pentecostal politics. These, he argued, would enable us “to move beyond conspiracy theories, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, general theories about the potential of evangelical (Pentecostal) religion based on historical analogy or on supposed essential characteristics of Charismatic Christianity.”¹²² Similarly, Birgit Meyer has also indicated the need for in-depth research on PMs’ intersection with politics in Ghana, arguing that PMs attitude towards democracy has hardly been subjected to research.¹²³ If anything, Freston and Meyer’s suggestions have become even more pertinent almost two decades later as Pentecostal political actions have become more prominent and their political engagements more diverse.

¹¹⁶ Larbi, *Pentecostalism*, 430.

¹¹⁷ Paul Gifford, ed., *The Christian Churches and the Democratisation of Africa*, Studies of Religion in Africa (Leiden: Brill, 1995); Terence O. Ranger, “Introduction: Evangelical Christianity and Development in Africa,” in *Evangelical Christianity and Development in Africa* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 3–36. Terrace Ranger, “Evangelical Christianity and Democracy in Africa,” *Transformation* 19, no. 4 (2002): 265–67.

¹¹⁸ Donald Miller, “2016 SSSR Presidential Address: Progressive Pentecostals: The New Face of Christian Social Engagement,” *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 46, no. 4 (2007): 435–445.; Dena Freeman, “Pentecostalism and Economic Development in Sub-Saharan Africa,” in *The Routledge Handbook of Religions and Global Development*, ed. Emma Tomalin (Oxon: Routledge, 2015); Katherine Attanasi and Amos Yong, eds., *Pentecostalism and Prosperity: The Socio-Economics of the Global Charismatic Movement*, Christianities of the World (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012)

¹¹⁹ Paul Freston, “Evangelicals and Politics: A Comparison between Africa and Latin America,” *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 13, no. 1 (1998): 37–49; Gina Lende, “The Rise of Pentecostal Power: Exploring the Politics of Pentecostal Growth in Nigeria and Guatemala” (MF Norwegian School of Theology, 2013).

¹²⁰ Omenyo, “Comparative Intervention of Protestants & Pentecostals”; Adogame, “Politicization of Religion and Religionization of Politics in Nigeria”; Linda Lidzén, “A Comparative Study of the Social Welfare Provided by Three Christian Churches in Accra, Ghana” (University of Gavle, 2008).

¹²¹ Paul Freston, *Evangelicals and Politics in Asia, Africa and Latin America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 113. See also Lende, “The Rise of Pentecostal Power: Exploring the Politics of Pentecostal Growth in Nigeria and Guatemala,” 10.

¹²² Freston, 113.

¹²³ See Birgit Meyer, “Christianity in Africa: From African Independent to Pentecostal-Charismatic Churches,” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 33 (2004): 465; Meyer, “Praise the Lord,” 97.

While Freston's call has received some attention in Zimbabwe¹²⁴ and Zambia,¹²⁵ there has been no contextual study that comprehensively traces the trajectories and maps the changing modes of Pentecostal engagement with politics in Ghana. Research of this kind remains scanty.¹²⁶ This study commits to Freston and Meyer's call and is focused on contributing towards filling this gap in the literature on Ghana.

The literature on PMs and politics in Africa can be classified as representing a debate, in which two overarching theses dominate the scholarly work. The first thesis is represented in works that are skeptical or dismiss any hope of the ability of Pentecostalism to transform the political sphere in any constructive way.¹²⁷ The second concerns those that either point to potentials or insist that the Pentecostal enterprise transforms the political sphere in a meaningful way.¹²⁸

¹²⁴ See Ezra Chitando, ed., *Prayers and Players : Religion and Politics in Zimbabwe* (Harare: Sapes Books, 2013); Ezra Chitando, Masiwa Ragies Gunda, and Joachim Kügler, eds., *Prophets and Profits and the Bible in Zimbabwe Series*, Bible in African Studies (Bamberg: University of Bamberg Press, 2013); Phillip Musoni, "African Pentecostalism and Sustainable Development: A Study on the Zimbabwe Assemblies of God Africa, Forward In Faith Church," *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention* 2, no. 10 (2013): 75–82; Nonimous Hameno, "Country Report: The Political and Social Impact of Prophetic Churches in Zimbabwe," A Research Paper (Harare: Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, October 2014); Erica Bornstein, "The Spirit of Development: Protestant NGOs, Morality, and Economics in Zimbabwe," in *Religion in History, Society, and Culture: Protestant NGOs, Morality, and Economics in Zimbabwe*, ed. Frank Reynolds and Winnifred Fallers Sullivan, Routledge Series (New York: The University of Chicago, 2003), 9–44."

¹²⁵ Naar M'fundisi, "Pentecostal and Charismatic Spiritualities and Civic Engagement in Zambia (1964-2012)" (Unpublished PhD Thesis: University of Birmingham, 2014); Austin Cheyeka, Marja Hinfelaar, and Bernhard Udelhoven, "The Changing Face of Zambia's Christianity and Its Implications for the Public Sphere: A Case Study of Bauleni Township, Lusaka," *Journal of Southern African Studies* 40, no. 5 (September 3, 2014): 1031–45; Burgess, "Pentecostals and Development in Nigeria and Zambia."

¹²⁶ For some limited exceptions see Michael Perry Kweku Okyerefo, "The Gospel of Public Image in Ghana," in *Christianity and Public Culture in Africa*, ed. Harri Englund (Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2011), 204–15; Asamoah-Gyadu, "God Bless Our Homeland Ghana"; Michael Nii Osah Tettey, "Pentecostalism and Empowerment: A Study of the Church of Pentecost and International Central Gospel Church" (University of Edinburgh, 2015); Joseph Quayesi-Amakye, "Pentecostals and Contemporary Church-State Relations in Ghana," *Journal of Church & State* 57, no. 4 (2015): 640–57; Alexander Nana Yaw Kumi-Larbi, "Church of Pentecost: A Blessing to the Nation Ghana," in *Church of Pentecost's God's Faithfulness to the Church of Pentecost*, Church of Pentecost (Labadi: The Church of Pentecost, forthcoming); Michael Perry Kweku Okyerefo, "Philanthropy as Image Politics in Ghana's New Churches," Critical Investigations into Humanitarianism in Africa, *Exploring Religion, Faith, and Tradition* (blog), January 16, 2017, <http://www.cihablog.com/philanthropy-image-politics-ghanas-new-churches/>.

¹²⁷ The key advocate of this stance is Paul Gifford. See for instance Paul Gifford, "Christian Fundamentalism and Development in Africa," *Review of African Political Economy* 19, no. 52 (1991): 9–20; Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity*, 161.

¹²⁸ Ogbu Kalu, *African Pentecostalism: An Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008); Ruth Marshall, "'Power in the Name of Jesus': Social Transformation and Pentecostalism in Western Nigeria 'Revisited,'" in *Legitimacy and the State in Twentieth Century Africa*, ed. Terrace Ranger and O. Vaughan (London: Macmillan, 1993), 213–46; Birgit Meyer, "Delivered from the Power of Darkness: Confessions of Satanic Riches in Christian Ghana," *Africa*, no. 65 (1995): 236–55. See also Stephen Ellis and Gerrie ter Haar, "Religion and Development in Africa," (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2004); Stephen Ellis and Gerrie ter Haar, "The Role of Religion in Development: Towards a New Relationship between the European Union and Africa," *The European Journal of Development Research* 18, no. 3 (2006): 351–67.

This review will not re-hash these two prepositions. Instead, the chapter principally reviews recent scholarly works. We focus on how these studies have analysed and interpreted the shifts in the interface between Pentecostalism and politics in Ghana, the ways in which these inform this thesis, and how this study intends to advance the field.

One important recent study of Pentecostal interaction with politics in Ghana is Joseph Quayesi-Amakye's "Pentecostals and Contemporary Church-State Relations in Ghana." This article identified politics, health, and education as new areas that PMs are focused on in their interaction with the state.¹²⁹ Quayesi-Amakye's discussion helpfully recognises the entry of Neo-Prophetic Ministries (NPMs) into politics. This inclusion is important because Neo-Prophetic politics do represent a significant new mode of Pentecostal engagement with politics. Hence, discussion of it does justice to the continuity in the Pentecostal spiritualisation of politics, as well as confirms the widely-held view of a variety of Pentecostal responses to political issues.

Quayesi-Amakye's article notes the development of an emerging Pentecostal political theology, although he did not attempt a detailed construction of this theology. However, in an earlier book published in 2013, *Christology and Evil in Ghana: Towards Pentecostal Public Theology*, Quayesi-Amakye proposed a Pentecostal public theology. In that book he sought to establish the relationship between Pentecostal understanding of Christology and suffering and its impact on the Ghanaian socio-political sphere. Using songs, sermons, other ritual practices and interviews with church members and leaders of the Church of Pentecost (CoP), he interrogated how members and leaders understand prayer and other ritual access through the power of God to deal with malevolent spirits.¹³⁰ The book concluded that there is a conflict between the understanding of members and leaders on the origin of evil and suffering. While members attribute evil and suffering to evil spirits, church leaders attribute suffering to evil spirits, human and natural causes. Quayesi-Amakye then proposed a Pentecostal theology of public engagement that reflects Pentecostal leaders' understanding of evil and suffering and suggested that PMs get involved in mundane activities and take more interest in the activities of the state—because it is not every challenge of the state that is spiritual.

This study builds on these two works, but goes beyond Quayesi-Amakye's proposed theology for Pentecostalism which was built from one Pentecostal tradition. Rather, this study

¹²⁹ Quayesi-Amakye, "Pentecostals and State Relations," 641.

¹³⁰ Joseph Quayesi-Amakye, *Christology and Evil in Ghana: Towards Pentecostal Public Theology*, vol. 49, *Currents of Encounter: Studies on the Contact between Christianity and Other Religions, Beliefs and Cultures* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2013), 3–23.

constructs a theology of three PMs spanning two major strands of Pentecostalism, namely Classical and Charismatic ministries in Ghana. No other attempt has been made to construct and evaluate the political theologies of the major Pentecostal groupings in Ghana in this way,¹³¹ although they are evident in Ghana and other African countries like Nigeria and the Ivory Coast.¹³²

This construction of specific theologies is important for a number of reasons. First, such a construction means we avoid generalisation and show the distinctiveness of each ministry's theology. Second, we are able to easily compare such theologies with the practices of the church to conclude on areas of conformity and deviations. This will not be possible with a proposed theology or a uniform theology because such theologies are ideals. They are not constructed from the understanding of a particular ministry and thus are not distinctive. Third, we are able to compare and contrast these theologies with each other as well as with other existing theologies to ascertain areas of commonalities and divergence.

Another important recent work is the 2015 unpublished PhD thesis of Perry Osah Tettey. Using a case study of the ICGC and the CoP, Tettey's thesis focuses on how these churches consolidate social, cultural and religious capital in their efforts to empower individuals and society.¹³³ One of the strengths of Tettey's work is that it incorporates the views of members of the church whose voices are usually muted in discussions concerning how beneficial the teachings and activities of their churches are to them.¹³⁴ The thesis rightly "fills in some of the previously unexplained recent developments and on-going reforms within Pentecostalism in Ghana,"¹³⁵ especially on how Pentecostal teachings and church polity empower and disempower members to engage with other aspects of life including politics and public life. The ability of Pentecostal teachings to empower and transform the lives of members is an important consideration in this study and thus this work benefits from Tettey's research, who was also the respondent of the ICGC for this current study.

However, Tettey's sample of one Classical and one Charismatic ministry limits his findings in a manner similar to that of Quayesi-Amakye's work. He did not deal with the NPMs and how their teaching and other practices such as prophetic declarations impact the political

¹³¹ For a few limited exceptions see Christian van Gorder, "Beyond the Rivers of Africa: The Afrocentric Pentecostalism of Mensa Otabil," *Pneuma* 30 (2008): 33–54; Rijk van Dijk, "Beyond the Rivers of Ethiopia: Pentecostal Pan-Africanism and Ghanaian Identities in the Transnational Domain," in *Situating Globality. African Agency in the Appropriation of Global Culture*, ed. Wim van Binsbergen and Rijk van Dijk, ASC African Dynamics Annual Series 3 (Leiden: Brill Academic Publishers, 2004), 163–89.

¹³² See Heuser, "Disjunction–Conjunction–Disillusionment," 14.

¹³³ Michael Nii Osah Tettey, "Pentecostalism and Empowerment: A Study of the Church of Pentecost and International Central Gospel Church" (Unpublished PhD. Thesis, University of Edinburgh, 2015), iii.

¹³⁴ Tettey, "Pentecostalism and Empowerment," 364.

¹³⁵ Tettey, "Pentecostalism and Empowerment," iv.

sphere as he did for the other Pentecostal strands.¹³⁶ The Neo-Prophetic focus on prophetic declaration ('divine prediction'), is a highly significant development in the Pentecostal interface with politics in Ghana. This study shows how the surge in 'divine predictions' is linked to the larger transitions in the Pentecostal spiritual interpretations of the state of the nation. This study further demonstrates how 'divine predictions' are being used to challenge the spiritual authority of mostly Charismatic and Classical Pentecostal pastors who claim to be the spiritual gate keepers of the nation.

Yet another recent work that was important for our task is Paul Gifford's *Christianity, Development and Modernity in Africa*. In this work, Gifford argues that on the one hand the enchanted worldviews and prosperity gospel of PMs militate against development because they promote fear and downplay human agency and responsibility.¹³⁷ On the other hand the disenchanted outlook of Roman Catholicism, with its focus on development is also incapable of adequately addressing the religious imagination of Africans (in their enchanted worldview).¹³⁸ While this work reinforces Gifford's longstanding view concerning the transformative nature of African Pentecostalism, the work also sought to 'square up the equation' by pointing to the over-concentration of the Catholic Church on this-worldly activities – which in essence ignores the spiritual needs of its members.

A key limitation of this work, which is also replicated in a number of Gifford's works, is his penchant for essentialism in his analyses.¹³⁹ For instance, in this work he uses two Charismatic Churches and the Catholic Church to essentially represent PMs and HMCs respectively, and concludes that their teachings and interventions cannot transform African societies into modern economies.¹⁴⁰

The present study can be distinguished from Gifford's because although it agrees with some of his conclusions on the negative impact of some of the teachings of specific ministries on the socio-political life of African countries, it avoids generalisations based on essentialism in its analysis of the Christian churches. The scope of the present study enables meticulous analysis of a broad spectrum of PMs engagement. Six ministries spanning four strands of Pentecostalism were selected for this work, representing the largest Pentecostal groups in terms

¹³⁶ Nonetheless the author hints of the empowering and disempowering nature of prophecy in the two church he studied See Tettey, 224–225.

¹³⁷ Paul Gifford, *Christianity, Development and Modernity in Africa* (London: Hurst and Company, 2015), 66–68.

¹³⁸ Gifford, 144. See also Paul Gifford, "Trajectories in African Christianity," *International Journal for the Study of the Christian Church* 8, no. 4 (2008): 279. ; Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity*, 169–172.

¹³⁹ See Gifford, "Modernity in Africa," 5; Paul Gifford, *Christianity in Africa*, 33; Paul Gifford, "Trajectories in African Christianity," 169–72.

¹⁴⁰ Gifford, *Modernity in Africa*, 6.

of numerical strength. Despite the diverse nature of these groups the study carefully aligns specific modes of engagement with specific strands, instead of the generalising certain patterns as being representative of all PMs. For example, Chapter 5 of this study clearly demonstrates how ‘divine prediction’ of political happenings is a feature of the Neo-Prophetic politics in particular. In essence, this study evaluates Gifford’s view in *Christianity, Development and Modernity in Africa* and other works by him; it demonstrates how his analyses of Pentecostal teachings and practices have sometimes been narrow and failed to take into consideration other strands of Pentecostalism and their interventions.¹⁴¹

Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu’s essay, “God Bless our Homeland Ghana: Religion and Politics in a Postcolonial African State”, is another important work. This essay, written in honour of John Pobee, one of the pioneers of postcolonial studies of religion and politics in Ghana, is a comparison of the approaches adopted by the HMCs and the PMs in their dealings with various political regimes and systems in Ghana.¹⁴² This work is generally a useful update on Christianity and politics in Ghana, and fills gaps left by Elom Dovlo, who in turn followed John Pobee and Ebenezer Obiri Addo.¹⁴³ These gaps concern developments in religion and politics in Ghana from the end of the I.K. Acheampong regime in 1979 to the Fourth Republic—Pobee and Obiri Addo having written on the same developments from Kwame Nkrumah’s regime from 1957 to the regime of Acheampong. One of the key highlights of the essay is his cataloguing of the various points of misunderstandings between PMs and HMCs so far as their interpretation of the political sphere is concerned.

One limitation of Asamoah-Gyadu’s essay is his over-concentration on what can be termed as the Pentecostal ‘comparative advantage in spirituality.’¹⁴⁴ Such a focus ignores the direct interventions of PMs in national politics including in health, education, electoral processes, and other areas. In essence, this presents only one side of Pentecostal engagement with politics. Nonetheless, this study will expand on Asamoah-Gyadu’s work on the Pentecostal spiritualisation of politics as well as make an extensive mapping of their direct interventions in Ghana’s democracy and political economy.

Comfort Max-Wirth’s 2016 unpublished PhD thesis on “Juju and Statecraft: Occult Rumours and Politics in Ghana,” though focused on rumours of the occult in Ghanaian politics,

¹⁴¹ Gifford usually focuses on Charismatic Churches and avoids the Classical Pentecostal Churches which are the biggest Pentecostal ministries in Ghana.

¹⁴² Asamoah-Gyadu, “God Bless Our Homeland Ghana,” 168–183.

¹⁴³ Asamoah-Gyadu, “God Bless Our Homeland Ghana,” 167.

¹⁴⁴ Fredrick Acheampong, review of “God Bless Our Homeland Ghana: Religion and Politics in a Post-Colonial African State,” by Asamoah-Gyadu Kwabena, in Cephas Omenyo and Eric B Anum, eds. *Trajectories of Religion in Africa: Essays in Honour of John S. Pobee*, YANA, no. 63 (2014): 13.

is another useful reference for this study. Max-Wirth argues that the “flourishing of political-occult rumours and the strength of Pentecostalism are related.”¹⁴⁵ Her thesis demonstrates the saliency of spirituality in African politics, but more importantly for our purpose, the continuous Pentecostal demonisation of other sources of power and claims to superior power.¹⁴⁶ Sections of Chapters 3 and 5 below respectively analyse Pentecostal condemnation of African Indigenous Religion and intra-religious feuds among PMs concerning who has the authority to speak on behalf of God concerning the nation state.

The above works, among others, provide useful contextual frameworks and examples for this study. Nonetheless this thesis can be distinguished from existing works for a number of reasons. First, a key overarching difference is that the present work uses a continuity and discontinuity approach to analyse Ghanaian Pentecostal engagement with politics in Ghana. Previous works are either focused on departures (the new ways PMs are directly engaging in the political sphere) or their continuities (usually emphasising Pentecostal passivity and lack of interest in political issues).¹⁴⁷ This study adopts a ‘new normal’ approach to demonstrate how Pentecostals are engaging in politics directly and indirectly (spiritualising) at the same time. The rationale for this is to demonstrate how PMs are negotiating these two realms in fulfilment of the biblical task of ‘being in the world but not of the world’ (John 15:19).

A second distinguishing feature is that this thesis helps to explain why Ghanaian PMs were not previously active in politics, a question previous writers have not addressed comprehensively. Hence, while this study is situated within the context of the Fourth Republic, the broader context of Christianity and politics in Ghana is also crucial in order to trace the transition of PMs from enclave to active engagement. This background is important, for it is the basis upon which one can determine a shift in attitude.¹⁴⁸

Third, the study differs from other works because of the dynamic way it measures Pentecostal participation in Ghana’s democratic processes and economy goals. While earlier works detailed various areas of Pentecostal participation in politics, there have been few attempts to measure these interventions against the social and economic aspirations of the context being studied. This study considers Pentecostal interventions in relation to the

¹⁴⁵ Comfort Max-Wirth, “Juju and Statecraft: Occult Rumours and Politics in Ghana” (Victoria University of Wellington, 2017), i.

¹⁴⁶ Max-Wirth, 86–93.

¹⁴⁷ For an exception see Samuel Zalanga, “Religion, Economic Development and Cultural Change: The Contradictory Role of Pentecostal Christianity in Sub-Saharan Africa,” *Journal of Third World Studies* 27, no. 1 (2010): 43–62.

¹⁴⁸ See Joseph Florez’s “Continuity and Rupture Pentecostal Practice, Community, and Memory in Pinochet’s Chile,” *Journal of Religion and Society* which argues for the importance of wider historical framework in understanding engagement. Vol 19, 2007

developmental goals of Ghana, using the economic and democratic goals captured in the Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda and the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (ACDEG) respectively. This form of assessment is more empirically based and provides evidence of the specific areas of Pentecostal interventions.

A fourth distinctive aspect of this study is the way that it provides an interpretation of the political theologies that underpin Pentecostal political engagement in Ghana. It does so through analysis of the political theologies of three Pentecostal churches spanning two strands of Pentecostalism. This is a significant step, because as I have demonstrated in this review, there have been few attempts at theologising the Pentecostal interface with politics, but for the few micro church-based ones. Therefore this approach allows us to compare Pentecostals theology with practice in order to evaluate how PMs apply their religious and political views.

Finally, the study offers a different perspective on the shift from enclave to engagement. While scholars have noted this shift and demonstrated certain areas of participation, little effort has been made to explain what occasioned this new Pentecostal politics. This study fills this gap by exploring the overarching factors that led to the present interest of PMs in Ghanaian politics. The study departs from John F. McCauley's analysis which suggests that the failure of the state to provide for people's needs engendered Pentecostal interest in politics. While state failure is acknowledged as a possible factor, the growth of Pentecostalism and Ghana's return to democratic rule in 1993 are emphasised as more significant overarching influences.

2.2.0 Distinctive Pentecostal Emphases

This section is an evaluation of key areas that Pentecostals emphasise in their interventions in politics. The section raises current debates in these areas and how this study intends to approach these issues.

Democratisation has no doubt contributed to the growth and the ability of PMs to organise and involve themselves in politics although they played a small role in Ghana's return to democracy in 1993. This was the case because unlike the HMCs, PMs did not have the same structures which the HMCs have developed since the colonial days. Hence, at a time when authoritarian regimes had overstayed their welcome and their human right abuses had resulted in widespread criticism from the HMCs and other internal and external civil society organisations, PMs, for fear of been brutalised, stayed clear of confronting these regimes.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁹ Gifford, *Christianity in Africa: Its Public Role*, 86.

Nevertheless, the transition to democratic governance coupled with the delay in the Parousia means PMs have abandoned their retreat and lack of interest in this-worldly issues in favour of an emphasis on a theology that embraces socio-political concern.¹⁵⁰ They have since changed their orientation towards politics by making efforts to influence politics and supporting socio-economic development.

2.2.1 PMs and Ghana's Fourth Republican Democracy

In entering the political sphere, Pentecostals have adopted a pragmatic agenda. They have also embraced and participated in the new political order with the understanding that 'they are in this world but not of this world' (John 17; 14-16). In engaging in public discourses and intervening in political issues, PMs have been promoting democracy in the areas of good governance, peaceful electoral process, advocacy and advisory roles on civil society platforms. This attitude confirms the optimism of David Martin that PMs may in the long run help sustain democracy.¹⁵¹

Nonetheless, PMs' predilection to the things of the spirit and in keeping with their conservative view that they are witnesses of the most superior religion means that they are also engaged in activities that confirm the scepticism of scholars like Paul Freston,¹⁵² Terence Ranger¹⁵³ and Timothy Steigenga¹⁵⁴ as to the ability of Pentecostalism to promote democracy as well as confirm to some extent the views of scholars like Steve Brouwer, Paul Gifford, and Susan Rose, that Pentecostalism is a conservative religion that will not promote liberal democracy.¹⁵⁵ This conclusion is born out of some of the ministries' continuous spiritual interpretations concerning the affairs of the nation including biblical explanations as to who is qualified to lead the nation and the forecasting of political happenings through prophetic declarations.

Thus while they have consciously complemented the efforts of civil society organisations including the HMCs in promoting democracy, they have not abandoned their

¹⁵⁰ Heuser, "Encoding Caesar's Realm," 273.

¹⁵¹ See David Martin, *Tongues of Fire. The Explosion of Protestantism in Latin America* (Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 1990).

¹⁵² Paul Freston, ed., *Evangelical Christianity and Democracy in Latin America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

¹⁵³ Terence O Ranger, ed., *Evangelical Christianity and Democracy in Africa* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.)

¹⁵⁴ Timothy J Steigenga, *The Politics of the Spirit: The Political Implications of Pentecostalized Religion in Costa Rica and Guatemala* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2001).

¹⁵⁵ Steve Brouwer, Paul Gifford and Susan D. Rose, *Exporting the American Gospel. Global Christian Fundamentalism* (New York: Routledge, 1996).

agenda of winning the nations for God and in so doing establishing the kingdom of God on earth.¹⁵⁶ This agenda leads them to publicly demonise other religious groups like the African Indigenous Religions (AIR) and oppose laws that are perceived to be anti-Christian, like same-sex relations. This attitude undermines the secular nature of Ghana and calls into question their commitment to the democratic culture. This study examines this ambivalence.

2.2.2 PMs and Socio-Economic Concern

One of the key areas that PMs have engaged the political sphere is that of the economy of Ghana. Cephas Omenyo, in a comparison of interventions, has shown that Pentecostal interventions in these social service sectors are nowhere near those of the HMCs.¹⁵⁷ This is rightly so because the HMCs have engaged in these interventions since the colonial era and have in some cases received external support from missionary sources that originally established these churches and some of the current assets of the former. While PMs have previously been criticised for either not supporting the efforts of governments or only creating opportunities for their members, in recent years most of their interventions have been open to all, as Michael Perry Kweku Okyerefo and Quayesi-Amakye have demonstrated in their publications.¹⁵⁸

Between the argument of the inability of PMs' interventions to transform the economies of their countries and those who think otherwise lies a third school of thought that calls for the re-evaluation of the parameters and methodology adopted in analysing the interventions of PMs in the economies they operate.¹⁵⁹ This position encourages scholars to pay attention to context, time and the scope of their evaluations. This study belongs to this third school of thought and demonstrates that in considering the context of the study and in going beyond the scope of Pentecostal teaching and spiritual explanations to mundane issues, this stream of Christianity is making an impact on the livelihoods of people.

¹⁵⁶ For example, the Church of Pentecost Vision 2018 documents prioritises the nurturing of the spiritual development of members and taking advantage of their engagement with the political and general public sphere for evangelism. See The Church of Pentecost, "Five-Year Vision for the Church of Pentecost (2013- 2018)" (General Council of the Church of Pentecost, 2014), 16-22.

¹⁵⁷ Omenyo, "Comparative Intervention of Protestants & Penetcostals."

¹⁵⁸ Okyerefo, "The Gospel of Public Image in Ghana"; Okyerefo, "Philanthropy and New Churches; Quayesi-Amakye, "Pentecostals and State Relations in Ghana."

¹⁵⁹ See Robert D. Woodberry, "The Economic Consequences of Pentecostal Belief," *Transaction Social Science and Modern Society* 44, no. 1 (2006): 29; Robert D. Woodberry, "Pentecostalism and Economic Development," in *Markets, Morals and Religion*, ed. Jonathan B. Ember (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2008), 158; Martin Lindhardt, "Introduction Presence and Impact of Pentecostal/Charismatic Christianity in Africa," in *Pentecostalism in Africa : Presence and Impact of Pneumatic Christianity in Postcolonial Societies*, ed. Martin Lindhardt (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 34. See also Freeman, "Pentecostalism and Development in Africa"; Flory and Miller, "The Dream Center"; Miller and Yamamori, *Global Pentecostalism*.

In the absence of longitudinal surveys on the impact of religion on the economic development,¹⁶⁰ this study relies on qualitative data by pitching Pentecostal interventions against government policies, specifically the Ghana Shared Growth and Development Strategy to see how Pentecostal activities align with those of the government. The findings from this comparison show that despite some shortcomings, these ministries are supporting Ghana's economy.

2.2.3 PMs Spiritual Politics and the Emergent Prophetic Politics

PMs have given a variety of spiritual narratives, interpretations and suggestions as to how individuals and by extension, the nations of Africa, can overcome their political and socio-economic challenges. Gifford has traced the trajectories of these spiritual narratives¹⁶¹ and identified prophecy as a new emergent form of Pentecostal narrative that was yet to capture scholarly attention. Since Gifford's assertion, NPMs have burgeoned and entered the political sphere claiming superior power in solving the problems of the nation.

While a host of studies have been conducted on the Neo-Prophetic ministries following Gifford's observation,¹⁶² most of them including recent scholars pay less attention to the interface between this strand of Pentecostalism and politics, especially the forecasting of political happenings ('divine predictions'). This study gives attention to this mode of engagement for a number of reasons. First, the timing of the prophetic entry into Ghana's political sphere provides a different perspective from that which has usually occasioned the rise in prophetic activities (Prophetism) in Ghana¹⁶³ and other African countries.¹⁶⁴ The surge has usually been necessitated by severe economic crisis and political instability. As this work will show, the surge in prophetic politics is taking place at a time when Ghana is not in any

¹⁶⁰ Woodberry, "The Economic Consequences of Pentecostal Belief," 29.

¹⁶¹ Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity*, 44–122.

¹⁶² Joseph Quayesi-Amakye, "Ghana's New Prophetism: Antecedents and Some Characteristic Features," *Australasian Pentecostal Studies*, no. 15, accessed November 20, 2015, <http://aps-journal.com/aps/index.php/APS/article/view/125/122>; Joseph Quayesi-Amakye, "Prophetism in Ghana's New Prophetic Churches," *Journal of the European Pentecostal Theological Association* 35, no. 2 (2015): 162–73; Cephas Omenyo and Wonderful Adjei Arthur, "The Bible Says! Neo-Prophetic Hermeneutics in Africa," 19.1 (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013), 50–70; Cephas Omenyo, "Man of God Prophecy Unto Me: The Prophetic Phenomenon in African Christianity," vol. 17.1, *Studies in World Christianity* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011), 30–49; Mark Anderson, "'New Light in the Great Light Worship Centre'? An Examination of the Teaching and Worship of Prophet Apae Live's Church" (Unpublished MPhil Thesis, University of Ghana, 2009); Gideon Tetteh, "Analysing Perspectives on Evil, Enemy and Divinatory Consultation among Participants in Neo-Prophetic Movements in Pentecostal Ghana" (Unpublished MA Thesis, University of Oslo, 2016).

¹⁶³ Omenyo, "The History of Charismatic Churches in Ghana."

¹⁶⁴ See for instance Charity Manyeruke and Shakespear Hamauswa, "Prophets and Politics in Zimbabwe," in *Prophets and Profits and the Bible in Zimbabwe*, ed. Ezra Chitando, Masiwa Ragies Gunda, and Joachim Kügler, vol. 12, *Bible in African Studies* (Bamberg: University of Bamberg Press, 2013), 281–97.

serious economic challenges and or political crisis. The study demonstrates how the surge is part of the transitions in the Pentecostal responses to political issues.

Second, the focus on the prophetic shows the saliency of spirituality in the Pentecostal narratives about politics as well as confirms the multiplicity of responses to national issues which, as this study demonstrates in chapter 4, creates conflicts among Pentecostal churches and leaders who also claim to speak on behalf of God. Furthermore, the conflict following a prophetic declaration raises issues concerning the credibility and authenticity of prophetic messages, and generally of Pentecostal proposed remedies to national issues.

Third, ‘divine predictions’ are by far the most visible expression of Pentecostal spiritualisation in the political sphere. This is because unlike other spiritual responses that speak broadly on national issues, made in private or rumoured, ‘divine predictions’ make public specific issues and personalities who may be affected by such divine plans. This personalisation of politics has frequently forced political action in response, in order to avert the catastrophes that are commonly forecast in such cases. These are all important developments in Pentecostal engagements with politics in Ghana which this study explored.

2.2.4 PMs Theologies: Interpreting the Distinctive Emphasis

The multiplicity of direct interventions by PMs and their different spiritual responses to political issues make it imperative that current studies interrogate the general Pentecostal understanding of the world as it relates to politics – in this case Pentecostal political theology. This is important because such theologies provide us with an interpretation of the reasons that underlie Pentecostal interventions. The construction of these theologies is also important because it provides a timely update owing to the shifts in Pentecostal attitudes towards politics over the years and hence the possibility of theological shifts. Pentecostalism as a religion based on experience has not made a conscious attempt to construct or develop a theological understanding of politics. Coupled with the fact that Pentecostal studies are still at the early stage, most existing studies are scholarly attempts to either develop or propose a political theology based on scholars understanding of the Pentecostal ministries.¹⁶⁵ Still there are also other works that are focused on particular Pentecostal ministries.¹⁶⁶ Such proposed theologies

¹⁶⁵ Kalu, “Faith and Politics in Africa: Emergent Political Theology of Engagement in Nigeria”; Kalu, *African Pentecostalism*; Yong, *In the Days of Caesar*.

¹⁶⁶ See Quayesi-Amakye, *Christology and Evil*; Gorder, “Beyond the Rivers of Africa”; van Dijk, “Beyond the Rivers of Ethiopia.”

or ‘ministry-focused’ theologies leave little room for a comparison among these understandings in order to establish areas of commonalities and divergence.

Hence unlike the previous works that were limited to one ministry and others like that of Joseph Quayesi-Amakye that proposed a theology of public engagement based on the evaluation of one ministry (CoP), this study constructs a distinctive theology of each of the two major strands of Pentecostalism in Ghana, specifically the CoP on the one side and the ICGC and the ACI on the other. The study relates these theologies with Pentecostal interventions in the three broad chapters of this study.

2.3.0 Methods and Strategies in Pentecostal Interventions

PMs adapt various strategies as they seek to capture the imagination of the nation-state. One of the key enablers in this quest is the use of the media, both print and electronic and recently a variant of electronic media commonly referred to as social media. Rosalind I. J. Hackett, Birgit Meyer, Marleen De Witte and Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu and other scholars have written extensively on the Pentecostal use of the media to propagate their gospel and engage in the public sphere.¹⁶⁷ All the selected PMs for this study have daily or weekly radio and television programmes either on dedicated channels or paid air time on various media platforms.

Undoubtedly, the use of the media has been made possible by the liberalisation of the media landscape which came into force in 1993 following Ghana’s return to democratic rule and the ability of PMs to harness media theologies in their activities, a feature they perfected from North American televangelists.¹⁶⁸ These electronic media platforms are complemented with the use of social media which personalises their messages and reaches a sizeable proportion of the populace, especially the youth who form more than 55% of the Ghanaian

¹⁶⁷ Rosalind I. J. Hackett, “Introduction: New Media and Religious Transformations in Africa,” in *New Media and Religious Transformations in Africa* (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2015), 1–16; Asamoah-Gyadu, “Of Faith and Visual Alertness: The Message of ‘Mediatized’ Religion in an African Pentecostal Context”; Marleen De Witte, “Business of the Spirit: Ghanaian Broadcast Media and the Commercial Exploitation of Pentecostalism,” *Journal of African Media Studies* 3, no. 2 (2011):189-204; Marleen De Witte, “Altar Media’s Living Word: Televised Charismatic Christianity in Ghana,” *Journal of Religion in Africa* 33, no. 2 (2003): 172–202; Marleen De Witte, “Television and the Gospel of Entertainment in Ghana,” *Exchange* 41, no.12 (2012): 144–64; Meyer, “Pentecostlite Culture on Screen”; Meyer, “Impossible Representations”; Meyer, “Praise the Lord;” Francis Benyah, “The Use of Mass Media by Charismatic Churches in Ghana: A Case Study of Perez Chapel International” (University of Ghana, 2014).

¹⁶⁸ Paul Gifford, “Prosperity: A New and Foreign Element in African Christianity,” *Religion, Prosperity in African Christianity*, 20 (1990): 378–88. See also David Maxwell, “Editorial,” *Journal of Religion in Africa*, XXVIII/3, (1998), 255-257.

population.¹⁶⁹ Yet another media platform where PMs project their views on the state of the nation are in the books written by the founders of these churches as well as conferences and major gatherings such as annual new year's meetings commonly referred to as Crossover Night Services.

In addition, PMs employ similar strategies used by Muslim clerics who visited Ashanti and the Northern territories during the 19th Century. This involves the courting of closer relations with political elites.¹⁷⁰ In Ghana, the CMs are commonly noted for this way of engaging political elites and most charismatic leaders openly boast of their friendship with politicians and this was confirmed by respondents who were interviewed for this study.¹⁷¹ The agenda has usually been to use such relations to convert these leaders, influence decisions that promote Christianity, and to advise them against any decision which Christianity does not support. James Saah's (Senior Bishop of Action Chapel International) observation below sums up this agenda:

Action like many of the Charismatic Churches has members who are very strong cabinet ministers; they are sitting in cabinet with the President. The President himself is the friend of the Archbishop (Duncan-Williams); he comes to church once in a while, major programmes he attends, and he sometimes invites him for prayer meetings. The Archbishop often goes to the Castle –the seat of government to pray for him and so he is just a phone call away and I think the advantage that gives us is that it doesn't give us control of the President but gives us his ears. It is for him to decide whether he will take the suggestions but at least it gives us a head start that we have the opportunity to tell him and he decides whether he will take it or not and I believe that has helped us. For all the presidents I've known in recent years, every one of them had a certain affiliation with the major charismatic churches in this country. The President says he belongs to Assemblies of God, her Ladyship (former Chief Justice), is also in Assemblies of God. Can you imagine the four hierarchy of authority in this country, they are born again Christians by the grace of God and ... that adds up to the clout of the church.¹⁷²

The CoP can even be said to be directly adopting this approach described by David Owusu-Ansah and Nathan Samwini with its ministry to the chieftaincy institutions in Ghana. The CoP is extensively engaging traditional rulers who exercise some level of judicial, executive and legislative powers in their local jurisdiction as recognised by article 276 of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana. This is a strategy by the church to convert both national and traditional

¹⁶⁹ The 2018 Index Mundi reports that Ghana has a young age structure, with approximately 57% of the population under the age of 25. See Ghana Demographic Profile 2018, World Factbook, January 20, 2018, https://www.indexmundi.com/ghana/demographics_profile.html. See also 2010 Population & Housing Census Report: Children, Adolescents & Young People in Ghana, (Accra: Ghana Statistical Service: July 2013), 1-16.

¹⁷⁰ See David Owusu-Ansah, "Prayer, Amulets and Healing," in *The History of Islam in Africa*, ed. Nehemia Levtzion and R.L. Pouwels (Athens: Ohio University, 2000), 478; Samwini, *Muslim Resurgence in Ghana*, 58.

¹⁷¹ David Stiles-Ocran, "Jesus' Kingdom Message and Ghana's New Christianity: A Contextual Approach to the Praxis of the Kingdom of God" (Unpublished MPhil. Thesis, University of Oslo, 2013), 41; Interview with Titi-Ofei; Interview with James Saah, April 23, 2015; Interview Worlanyo Agra, February 25, 2015; Interview with Ghartey, January 9, 2015.

¹⁷² Interview with Saah.

leaders in the hope of using such influence on them to win the whole nation for the Kingdom of God. It is reported that the CoP has since ordained traditional leaders as Elders (Presbyters) of the Church as a means of attracting traditional rulers to the Church.¹⁷³ The 2018 Vision document of the CoP, specifically that on ‘nurturing sustainable spiritual development,’ outlines the Church’s quest to establish the influence of God in all aspects of national life in anticipation of the Parousia:

Human and other related resources will be harnessed towards bringing down the kingdom and the will of God to impact all spheres of influence of society, including business, economy, education, media, governance, politics, traditional rule, culture and arts, the family, sports, entertainment, and religion.¹⁷⁴

Another strategy the church has adopted is to encourage and guide their members who feel called by God to enter into chieftaincy.¹⁷⁵ This is aimed at infiltrating the chieftaincy institution to transform certain cultural practices which they deem as inimical to society in general and to Christianity in particular.¹⁷⁶

2.4.0 Structures and Styles in Pentecostal Interventions

The history of individual PMs and the vision or gifting of their founders makes these churches approach politics differently. Pentecostal churches proliferated at different periods in Ghana’s political history. Therefore, the ways in which these churches encountered various political parties and governments at different times in their formative years have shaped their political outlooks and ways of engagements. A typical example is the two very different callings of Duncan-Williams and Otabil. Duncan-Williams claims he is an intercessor and thus most of his ministry to the public and the political actors are focused on intercessory prayers (spiritual warfare) to avert the works of territorial and other malevolent spirits whom he claims can lead to the election of bad leaders and hamper the progress of the nation. Otabil on the other hand claims he is called to liberate Africans and as a result his sermons, public speeches and writings, usually attack structures that hinder Africa’s liberation. He also seeks to motivate individuals to take their destinies into their hands by pursuing initiatives that will change these structures.

Another reason for these different approaches to political issues is the claims to superior power and the struggle for prominence and dominance within the religious and political space

¹⁷³ Quayesi-Amakye, “Pentecostals and State Relations,” 9–11, 16–18; Quayesi-Amakye, *Christology and Evil*, 49:122–35.

¹⁷⁴ The Church of Pentecost, “Vision 2018,” 74.

¹⁷⁵ The Church of Pentecost, “Vision 2018,” 16–18.

¹⁷⁶ The Church of Pentecost, “Vision 2018,” 18.

among the churches. These have led to splits, as pastors claiming superior visions and gifts usually want to dominate the Pentecostal sphere and ultimately the religious scene.¹⁷⁷ For instance, although most CPMs and some CMs come under the Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Council (GPCC),¹⁷⁸ this umbrella group has been dominated by CPCs since its inception in 1978.¹⁷⁹ Thus, the CPMs have more influence in the GPCC.¹⁸⁰ This is one of the reasons why some CMs have also developed their own networks.

The difference among the ministries means each ministry and umbrella organisation works independently. However, Pentecostal groups collaborate with the HMCs, particularly the GPCC and CCG's annual fraternal meetings and issuing of joint statements to the government of Ghana.¹⁸¹

Most Pentecostal umbrella groups, specifically the GPCC, NACCC and CCAG, have similar structures like those of the HMCs. Aside national executives who are usually drawn from among presidents or chairmen of member churches, there is a secretariat headed by a general secretary who is appointed on a rotational basis among member churches. The general secretary is responsible for running the day to day activities of their council or association and is supported by a programmes manager and administrative staff.¹⁸²

The general secretary usually triggers a particular intervention of the council or association by flagging a particular action or inaction of government or a media reportage of socio-political nature or significance.¹⁸³ The secretariat circulates this issue among the executives. Where there is need, the council/association convenes a meeting to consider its position. At other times the council or association may stay its position until it seeks further

¹⁷⁷ Asamoah-Gyadu, "Born of Water and the Spirit: Pentecostal/Charismatic Christianity in Africa," 392. See also Omenyo, "The Charismatic Renewal Movement in Ghana," 184.

¹⁷⁸ See Emmanuel Kingsley Larbi, *Pentecostalism: The Eddies of Ghanaian Pentecostalism* (Centre for Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies and Blessed Publications, 2001), 127. See also Amanor, "Pentecostalism in Ghana: An African Reformation."

¹⁷⁹ Omenyo have noted that there is no collaborations among most PMs at the official level. See Cephas Omenyo, "Charismatic Churches in Ghana and Contextualization," *Exchange* 31, no. 3 (2002):183. See also Paul Gifford, "Ghana's Charismatic Churches," *Journal of Religion in Africa* 24, no. 3 (1994): 257.

¹⁸⁰ See Amanor, "Pentecostalism in Ghana: An African Reformation" See also Cephas Omenyo, "Pentecostal-Type Renewal and Disharmony in Ghanaian Christianity," in *Global Pentecostalism: Encountering with Other Religious Traditions*, ed. David Westerlund (New York: I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd, 2009), 63, 71. The constitution of the GPCC is currently under review and this provision is one of many articles that may be amended. Interview with Samuel Antwi, March 16, 2015.

¹⁸¹ See Fredrick Acheampong and Francis Benyah, "Pentecostal Political Leveraging: The Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Council and Electoral Advocacy in Ghana," in George Ossom-Batsa, Nicoletta Gatti and Rabiatu Deinyo Ammah eds. *Religion and Sustainable Development: Ghanaian Perspective* (Rome: Urbaniana University Press, 2018).

¹⁸² National Association of Charismatic and Christian Churches, "Constitution of National Association of Charismatic and Christian Churches" (National Association of Charismatic and Christian Churches, n.d.), 3–4; Ghana Pentecostal Council, "GPC Constitution," 5–8.

¹⁸³ Interview with Samuel Antwi,

and better particulars.¹⁸⁴ This may include seeking audience with government and/or relevant institutions and individuals associated with the issue. After vetting these pieces of information, the council/association may usually issue a statement to state its position.

In the specific case of the GPCC, there are also communiques that are usually issued at the end of the council's annual meetings. These communiques are usually comprehensive as they review all the activities of governments and other agencies in the country for the year.

The only exception to this organised approach to engaging politics are the NPMs who, unlike the CPMs and CMs, are not properly organised to officially engage the public or politicians. Nonetheless, the political prophecies ('divine predictions') of pastors within this strand of Pentecostalism concerning specific political actors means that the former is constantly in the 'media eye' as they seek to explain and defend their prophetic utterances.

2.5.0 Conclusion

This chapter has provided a review of recent scholarly works on PMs in Ghana as a means of identifying gaps in existing literatures and how this study intends to advance the field. In this process, the chapter has also articulated how this study can be distinguished from earlier works. The chapter also analysed the current discourse in three key areas where PMs' emphasis in their engagement with political actors as well as the understandings that influence these outlooks and the methods adopted, and structures used in delivering these interventions. This review has provided a solid background for the next four chapters which begin with Pentecostal participation in Ghana's democracy.

¹⁸⁴ Interview with Samuel Antwi; Interview with Gideon Titi-Ofei and Interview with Prince Benny Wood.

CHAPTER 3: PENTECOSTALS AND DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION

GAY MARRIAGE BECOMES LAW IN THE UK TODAY... A sign of how “Civilized” the world has become... But if your government gives you the “Right” to break God’s law, it doesn’t exonerate you from God’s judgment...we are all “sinners” but a law to justify our sins is a bad law and a slap in the face of God...1st John 2:16-17: For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever. Shalom. (Bishop Prince Benny Wood, 2014)

3.0.0 Introduction

Bishop Wood’s Facebook post above,¹⁸⁵ posted on the day same-sex marriage became legal in the United Kingdom, underscores several issues concerning Pentecostal awareness and understanding of free speech and their right to air their opinions in a democratic setting. It illustrates the public presence of Pentecostal leaders and their use of modern media technologies and platforms to engage, initiate and participate in the public discourse. It also demonstrates Pentecostal leaders’ awareness of global issues and their potential local impact. Above all, it demonstrates leaders’ engagement with those issues that they perceive to affect their religion,¹⁸⁶ and their resolve to address such issues as part of a national discourse.

Pentecostal active participation in democratic processes constitutes one of the major shifts in their engagement with politics in the post-1993 period. A number of recent works have suggested that Pentecostal participation in the democratic process and certain areas of law-making have been growing and in fact began earlier in Ghana than in some other countries.¹⁸⁷ For example, Donald Miller and Tetsunao Yamamori studied a number of countries in 2007 and reported less interest among Pentecostals in public advocacy in those areas.¹⁸⁸ Despite these developments, there have been few efforts to comprehensively map Pentecostal efforts to intervene, negotiate and influence the democratic processes in Ghana during the Fourth Republic.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁵ Bishop Prince Benny Wood, 29 March 2014 Facebook Post, <https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=%20Gay%20Marriage%20becomes%20law%20in%20the%20UK%20today%20by%20%20Bishop%20Prince%20Benny%20Wood>

¹⁸⁶ See Jose Casanova, “Public Religion Revisited,” in *Religion: Beyond a Concept*, ed. Hent de Vries (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008), 115.

¹⁸⁷ Michael Perry Kweku Okyerefo, “The Gospel of Public Image in Ghana,” in *Christianity and Public Culture in Africa*, ed. Harri Englund (Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2011), 204–15; Acheampong, “Lost and Discovered Voices?”; Reich, Mary Grace. “Christian Institutions in Ghanaian Politics”; Max Wirth, “Juju and Statecraft”; Seth Tweneboah “Religion and Law in Contemporary Ghana: Traditions in Tension,” (Unpublished PhD. Thesis: Victoria University of Wellington, 2017).

¹⁸⁸ Donald Miller, “2016 SSSR Presidential Address: Progressive Pentecostals: The New Face of Christian Social Engagement,” *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 46, no. 4 (2007): 440–441.

¹⁸⁹ Some exceptions are Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, “God Bless Our Homeland Ghana: Religion and Politics in a Post-Colonial African State,” 165–83; Quayesi-Amakye, “Penetcostals and Contemporary State Relations”..

This chapter builds upon the earlier work of scholars like Kwesi Dickson and Gifford, and extends their analyses, by comparing Pentecostal participation in Ghana's democracy with the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (ACDEG). ACDEG was adopted on 30 January, 2007, during the 8th ordinary session of the Assembly of the African Union.¹⁹⁰ Its goal is to "reinforce the commitment of the state's parties of the African Union towards the protection of democracy and the rule of law, as well as human rights."¹⁹¹ ACDEG takes its inspiration from the United Nations resolutions, as well as from a number of Declarations and Decisions of the African Union.¹⁹² Ghana is member of the African Union and a signatory to this charter; the government has made a commitment to promoting the principles and expectations enshrined in this document. This makes the ACDEG a useful standard for measuring Pentecostal participation in Ghana's democracy, and Pentecostals' contribution to the state's democratic goals.

The ACDEG sets out the basic principles expected of member countries of the African Union, formerly Organisation of African Unity. In summary, the Charter "emphasise(s) the significance of good governance, popular participation, the rule of law and human rights."¹⁹³ Chapter 4 of the Charter requires among others that member states recognise popular participation through universal suffrage (elections) as the inalienable right of the people. State actors are also required to "take all appropriate measures to ensure constitutional rule, particularly constitutional transfer of power."¹⁹⁴ More importantly, the state must ensure that citizens enjoy fundamental freedoms and eliminate all forms of discrimination especially those based on political opinion, gender, ethnic, religious and racial grounds. They must also take all necessary measures to strengthen and resource the organs of state that are mandated to promote and protect human rights. This is in line with the African Union's plans to entrench democracy in member states.

In measuring participation of PMs against these principles and requirements set out in ACDEG, the chapter seeks to discover whether PMs have contributed toward democratic maturity and consolidation—from their role in transitional processes leading to democratic governance in 1993 onwards. It also explores how Pentecostals have responded to questions of human rights, their own and others, in relation to freedom of speech. Pentecostal participation

¹⁹⁰ African Union is an organisation of all African countries, formerly known as Organisation of African Unity. It is headquartered in Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia.

¹⁹¹ African Union, "African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance" (African Union, 2007), 1.

¹⁹² African Union, "African Charter," 1.

¹⁹³ African Union, "African Charter," 1.

¹⁹⁴ African Union, "African Charter," 5.

is assessed in connection with three broad areas: democratic protection, elections, and the rule of law and human rights. The chapter demonstrates that Pentecostal approaches to politics in Ghana involve not only direct intervention in the political and democratic processes previously dominated by Historic Mission Churches (HMCs), but also new focal points for political intervention. Specifically, PMs have sought to move issues of public policy and law-making such as legalisation of same-sex marriage and violations of constitutional rights to worship from the fringes to the centre of national debate.

3.1.0 Pentecostals and Democratic Protection

During the third wave of democratisation in Africa that started in the late 1980s, Christian churches, including some that had been complicit in the authoritarian rule of previous regimes, were instrumental in returning their countries to democratic rule. In Ghana, the case was a bit different because the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) that superintended over the road map for the Fourth Republic hijacked the process and influenced the work of the consultative assemblies that it established to deliberate on the new constitutional arrangements.¹⁹⁵ This was because of the churches' consistent criticism of the bad human rights record of the PNDC (1981-1992). Indeed, the HMCs, which had always insisted on democratic governance, were not even invited to submit proposals to the Consultative Assembly.¹⁹⁶ Nonetheless, Pentecostal churches, specifically the GPCC that had good relations with the PNDC, were invited.

Two features of this development were remarkable. On the one hand, the HMCs, which had played a key role in the struggle for Ghana's independence and democracy, were now sidelined from formal political engagement. This was a calculated attempt by the regime to disregard the input of the HMCs, whose opposition to the PNDC and political perspectives on the matters before the Consultative Assembly was widely known. On the other hand, PMs that had previously taken less interest in politics were now advocating democracy. Thus PMs have acknowledged democracy as a better alternative to authoritarian rule.

Chapter 5 clause 11 of the ACDEG—the Culture of Democracy and Peace—requires that state parties develop legislative and policy frameworks to establish and strengthen democracy

¹⁹⁵ See Kwesi Aubynn, *Behind the Transparent Ballot Box: The Significance of the 1990s Elections in Ghana* in Michael Cowen, Liisa Laakso (eds.) *Multi-party Elections in Africa* (Oxford: James Currey Limited, 2002), 75-103. The 258-member Consultative Assembly consisted of 22 members appointed by the PNDC, 121 members appointed by 62 corporate groups, and 117 members indirectly elected by District Assemblies.

¹⁹⁶ The HMCs nonetheless showed up and were allowed to present a collated view from their church members. See D.A. Dartey and D.A. Koranteng, *The Church and Ghana's Search for a New Democratic System* (Accra: Christian Council of Ghana, 1990), 3.

and peace. It insists that the state must “promote good governance by ensuring transparent and accountable administration, strengthen political institutions to entrench democracy culture as well as create conducive conditions for civil society organisations to exist and operate within the law.”¹⁹⁷ Pentecostals took the first step in this direction in the early 1990s by supporting what had become the popular view: that Ghana should return to civilian rule. The following sections outline the various interventions and activities undertaken by PMs to help in the maintenance of democracy in a peaceful environment.

3.1.1 Participation in Governance System

Pentecostal involvement in the development of Ghana’s contemporary democratic system has received little scholarly attention. This absence constitutes a significant gap in the literature on the role of the Christian churches in the establishment of democratic rule in 1993. Writing in 1994, Gifford credited the Charismatics’ role, in particular that of Archbishop Williams, at the national thanksgiving ceremony in 1993 as the beginning of Pentecostal engagement in the public sphere.¹⁹⁸ This overlooks significant earlier interventions. As early as 1990 the Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Council (GPCC), representing the Pentecostal ministries, made its formal presentation to the Consultative Assembly. In many ways, this rather than 1993 represented the genesis of a new Pentecostal political engagement. The GPCC’s participation in the Consultative Assembly can be described as one of PMs’ first significant recorded contributions to the Fourth Republic.

The GPCC’s proposal on the future system of government had been collated from congregations of its various member churches. The Council premised its mandate to submit its proposal on two sets of Bible texts, namely Matthew 5:13, 14, and 16, and Matthew 28:19-20. It argued that Jesus has sovereignty over the political and social structures of every nation because all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Him. Therefore, as disciples commissioned by Christ to bring all nations under His authority, the Church (represented by the Council) had a right to submit its position on the future government.¹⁹⁹ Additionally, the Council submitted that Christians are the ‘salt and light of the world’ and therefore the moral preserve and ethical conscience of the society. As such, they represented the moral and prophetic voice of the country.²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁷ African Union, “African Charter,” 6.

¹⁹⁸ Paul Gifford, “Ghana’s Charismatic Churches,” *Journal of Religion in Africa* 24, no. 3 (1994): 258.

¹⁹⁹ Ghana Pentecostal Council, “The Church Response to the Current Debate on the Quest for a Suitable Political System for the Republic of Ghana” (Ghana Pentecostal Council, n.d.).

²⁰⁰ Ghana Pentecostal Council.

Basing its arguments on Genesis 2:7 (the Principle of Life), Genesis 2:16-17 (Principle of Freedom) and Genesis 6:5 (the Principle of Sin), the Council took the position, widely shared among Ghanaians, that a democratic political system was the best option for Ghana. Democracy, the Council argued, had inbuilt checks and balances that inhibit man's quest for absolute power and domination.²⁰¹ The Council drew attention to the failed one-party system of Nkrumah and the CPP, and the 1977 proposed Union Government of Acheampong's Supreme Military Council. A multiparty system was deemed the only durable alternative capable of guaranteeing freedom, and so the Council advocated a multiparty democracy with an executive presidency, a lower and upper chamber of parliament, and a judiciary. These proposals (with the exception of an upper and lower parliament) were ultimately adopted by the Assembly.

Hence, PMs were among the Christian institutions that pushed for multiparty democracy in Ghana. They were also recognised by the government as important stakeholders in consultations on the shape of the nation's future government. Most importantly, the GPCC's position in these debates represented a departure from the previous Pentecostal attitude during the Pre-Fourth Republic era when they were coerced into political activities. Ordinarily the expectation would have been for them to have supported the PNDC regime, whose leader had publicly indicated his dislike for democracy.²⁰² On this occasion, the PMs were emboldened to adopt a contrary position following the popular call. Indeed, the regime was only initiating the process following internal and external pressure.²⁰³

3.1.2 Serving on Civil Society and State Institutions

One way PMs have sought to participate in the democratic process is by sitting on statutory boards, committees and commissions that supervise and make strategic decisions for state institutions or civil society organisations. In this context, members help to shape and influence

²⁰¹ Ghana Pentecostal Council.

²⁰² E. Brenya, S. Adu-Gyam, I. Afful B. Darkwa, M.B. Richmond, S.O. Korkor, E.S. Boakye and G.K. Turkson, "The Rawlings' Factor in Ghana's Politics: An Appraisal of Some Secondary and Primary Data," *Journal of Political Science and Public Affairs*, 1, no.4 (2015):4.

²⁰³ Opposition parties had regrouped under an umbrella group Movement for Freedom and Justice. This movement organised a series of lectures and demonstration to force the regime to return the country to civilian rule. Meanwhile Western aid donors have increasingly tied financial commitments to human rights protection and the regime felt the pressure to reform the political system after a series of structural adjustment programmes had yielded little results. See Jeff Hayness, "Ghana: From Personalist to Democratic Rule" in John A. Wiseman (ed.) *Democracy and Political Change in Sub-Saharan Africa* (London and New York, 1995), 96 and Canada: Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, *Constitutional Democracy and the Fourth Republic*, 1 November 1992, available at: <http://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6a7fb4.html> (accessed 27 February 2018)

the decisions of political actors and other interest groups, particularly in connection with government policy, and conflict resolution and prevention.

In the case of the GPCC, a 2003 review of its constitution made it possible for the Council to take a greater part in these state and civil society institutions.²⁰⁴ The review explicitly tasked GPCC leadership with giving greater attention to socio-economic and political issues affecting Ghanaians. This orientation towards participation in the democratic processes has therefore developed deliberately. Indeed, it represents a reorientation, in which GPCC has consciously aligned with strategies pursued by the state. Since 2010, the Council has focused on working with civil society organisations and other state agencies/constitutional bodies to help strengthen key institutions of state so that they can effectively carry out their mandate.²⁰⁵ Thus while their traditional support for state authority has continued, this has been expressed in a far more activist approach.

Mr. Ernest Asigiri, Head of Programmes at the GPCC, explained to this author that the GPCC consciously collaborates with civil society groups with similar agendas.²⁰⁶ For example, the GPCC is part of the Civic Forum Initiative that has been tasked with reviewing the 1992 Constitution of Ghana. Together with other interest groups represented on the Forum, it is presently advocating the election of District Chief Executives, rather than appointment by the President, in order to make these Executives accountable to the district.²⁰⁷ The Forum is also advocating the creation of a National Development Plan that political parties would be constitutionally required to adhere to.²⁰⁸ A national plan would follow consultation with a wide range of stakeholders, making it more democratic than political manifestoes prepared by a handful of party members. The constitutional requirement to adhere to the plan is also promoted as a way of preventing succeeding governments from neglecting or abandoning significant projects initiated by previous governments.

Another state institution that the GPCC serves on is the National Peace Council. The National Peace Council is a statutory institution established by an act of Parliament (Act 818) in 2011. It is national in character, with the national council supported by Regional and District Peace Councils across the country. The core function of the Peace Council is to develop

²⁰⁴Interview with Samuel Antwi, January 22, 2015.

²⁰⁵ On 26 August 2017, the GPCC launch a new 5-year strategic plan (2017-2021), which seeks to position the Council as the lead advocate for the unity of the Body of Christ in Ghana, the prophetic voice and gatekeeper of the nation and in the socio-economic and democratic development of Ghana. See Pentecost News, "Apostle S. Y. Antwi Leaves GPCC," *Church News* (Accra, 22 November 2017).

²⁰⁶Interview with Ernest Asigiri, February 25, 2015.

²⁰⁷Asigiri.

²⁰⁸Asigiri.

mechanisms to prevent, manage, and resolve conflicts, and to build sustainable peace in Ghana.²⁰⁹ This includes establishing early warning and response mechanisms to prevent conflicts before they escalate.²¹⁰

The Peace Council is heavily populated by Christian leaders and has since its inception been led by Christian leaders. Pentecostal churches have two permanent representative positions on the Council – one representative each from the GPCC and National Association of Charismatic and Christian Churches (NACCC).²¹¹ As members of the Peace Council, Pentecostal representatives have participated in the processes aimed at resolving chieftaincy and tribal conflicts especially those in the three Northern regions of Ghana.²¹² Additionally, the Peace Council has promoted peaceful elections in Ghana. For instance, ahead of the 2012 election, following violence in the 2008 electoral process, the Council urged all political parties to support the Kumasi Declaration: a stand against electoral violence, impunity and injustice that was also promoted by the Institute for Democratic Governance (IDEG) and the Manhyia Palace (Ashanti Kingdom).²¹³

Another area of Pentecostal participation in state institutions and civil society is through leaders who have been appointed by successive governments to serve on boards. For instance, the Prophet Martinson Yeboah (former Chairman of the COP) and Rev. S. Asore, Former General Superintendent of the AoG-G and former President of the GPCC, were appointed as members of the Council of State in President Rawlings's government.²¹⁴ More recently, Rev. Stephen Wengam (Director of Administration of AoG-G/Lead Pastor of the Cedar Mountain AoG-G, East Legon) and the Rt. Rev. Dr Paul Frimpong-Manso (current Superintendent of the AoG-G) have been appointed to chair the Sixth Prisons Council and the National Commission on Small Arms and Light Weapons respectively.

As members of these statutory bodies and civil society organisations, Pentecostal leaders have brought their influence to bear on many of the initiatives of the groups, just as the HMCs have and continue to. In situations where there are deadlocks on negotiations between

²⁰⁹The Government of Ghana, "National Peace Council Act 818" (Government of Ghana, May 16, 2011), 4.

²¹⁰National Peace Council, "About Us," National Peace Council, 2014, http://mint.gov.gh/peace/about_us.htm.

²¹¹The current representatives are the General Secretaries of the GPCC and National Association of Charismatic and Christian Churches (NACCC).

²¹² See William A. Awinador-Kanyirige, "Policy Brief: Ghana's National Peace Council" (Global Centre for Responsibility to Protect, August 2014).

²¹³National Peace Council of Ghana, "Kumasi Declaration" (Kumasi: National Peace Council, November 27, 2012).

²¹⁴ See Chapter 9, Article 89 of Ghana's 1992 Constitution. The Council of State is enjoined by Ghana's 1992 Constitution to "counsel the President in the performance of his functions" They are to "consider and advise the President or any other authority in respect of any appointment which is required by the constitution or any other law to be made in accordance with the advice of, or in consultation with the Council."

political actors and/or ethnic groups during conflicts, Pentecostal leaders have commonly relied on their religious influence to admonish the parties – some of whom are their members – to give peace a chance.²¹⁵

3.1.3 Prophetic Accountability

Classical PMs led by the GPCC have used their positions on boards to shape and influence government policies and programmes. At the individual level, other Pentecostal leaders, mainly from CMs, are also engaged in other civic initiatives where they view part of their task to involve ensuring transparency in governance. In particular, they emphasise judicious use of state resources and the curbing of corruption and corrupt practices. Another expression of this enforcement of accountability is through what can be described as ‘prophetic critique’; that is, through public reprimand of governments and making categorical declarations, purportedly on behalf of the people concerning particular deeds or decisions of a leader or government.

The establishment of good, transparent and accountable governance is a primary expectation of the African Charter.²¹⁶ Despite Ghana’s strides in this respect, and its comparatively good reputation in the West African sub-region, challenges remain.²¹⁷ For example, the Ghana National Development Planning Commission²¹⁸ contends that national development is hindered by a lack of “public ownership of, and participation in governance process, public and private corruption and limited awareness, advocacy and enforcement of rights and responsibilities.”²¹⁹ As a broad policy direction, the medium-term national development policy framework aims to expand and sustain opportunities for effective citizens’ engagement.²²⁰

The Action Chapel International’s (ACI) Good Corporate Governance Series is one initiative that aims to address some of these challenges. The series is a five-year programme (2017-2022) that seeks to promote good corporate governance by encouraging transparency, equity and the rule of law in the public and private sectors as means to fighting

²¹⁵ Interview with Asigri.

²¹⁶ African Union, “African Charter,” 6.

²¹⁷ Ghana National Development Planning Commission, *Medium-Term National Development Policy Framework: Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda II* Volume I: Policy Framework (2014-2017), December 2014, 144.

²¹⁸ The Ghana National Development Planning Commission is an institution set up under Article 87 of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana with a core mandate to advise the President on development planning policy and strategy

²¹⁹ Ghana National Development Planning Commission, *Medium-Term National Development Policy Framework*

²²⁰ Ghana National Development Planning Commission, 145.

corruption. It is a collaboration between the ACI, KRIF Ghana Limited²²¹ and the United States of America's Embassy in Ghana.

The programme aims to achieve its goals through a series of conferences that will bring together representatives of political parties, government agencies, civil society organisations, members of the diplomatic corps and international organisations operating in the country. These brokered meetings provide a platform for groups to “dialogue on the relevance of good corporate governance which are vital tools for the growth of any economy and its people.”²²² There are plans to replicate the projects in other countries over the following five years. By going global, the organisers hope to attract the attention of the United Nations General Assembly to give more attention to good corporate governance, which they consider to be essential to national development. The project seeks to implement its goals by incentivising action through rewards to deserving institutions that implement the charter, as demonstrated through a set assessment undertaken by an auditing firm.

The above initiative by the ACI shows that PMs do not consider practical action to be incompatible with spiritual intervention. Thus Duncan Williams continues to intercede with prayers for divine intervention of God in the lives of political and other institutional actors to enable them better manage their portfolios (see Chapter 5). Yet he is also spearheading an initiative on good governance both at the local and global level, a clear departure from the ACI's previous reliance on spiritual intervention alone.

Further issues of governance have emerged as a focal point in prophetic critique. While Prophets like Peter Anamoh, Isaac Owusu Bempah and J.Y. Adu and Francis Akwesi Amoako are known to have publically criticised one government or the other, Rev. Enoch Agbozo is one prophet who has consistently spoken on the conduct of various governments during the pre- and Fourth Republic period. Most spectacularly, in 2012 Agbozo called for the resignation of then sitting President Mills, the third President of the Fourth Republic. His call was based on a crisis concerning controversial financial payments by Mills's government to Mr. Alfred Agbeshi Woyome with respect to funds related to the 2008 Africa Cup of Nations tournament.

²²¹ KRIF Ghana is a Limited Liability Company that deals in stationery, office equipment and other consumables in Ghana.

²²² United States of America Embassy in Ghana, “Remarks by Ambassador Robert P. Jackson at Action Chapel International Good Governance Series,” *News & Events*, 31 January 2017 <https://gh.usembassy.gov/remarks-ambassador-robert-p-jackson-action-chapel-international-good-governance-series/>

A protracted and complex set of legal investigations revealed these payments to be unconstitutional.²²³

The wrong payments to Woyome became a topical issue because Woyome is a known financier for the President's party, the previous NPP government having refused to pay these same monies because they claimed they had done so through another sub-contractor of Woyome. Again, an attempt by the new Attorney General from the NDC government (Martin A.B.K. Amidu) to prosecute his predecessor (Mrs. Betty Mould-Iddrisu) and others who negotiated the payment with Woyome did not happen because Amidu was sacked by the President.²²⁴

In his public reprimand, after the initial revelation in the Auditor General's report, Agbozo circulated a letter to major denominations claiming God had asked him to ask the President to resign. The letter read:

Thus says the Lord. That having regard to the spiritual, political, governmental, economic, legal and moral fallout of the Woyome judgment debt payment and considering the resultant threat to peace, righteousness and justice, stability, security and progress of the country, the most honourable thing for his Excellency President Atta Mills to do is to vacate his office, dismiss the government and appoint a presidential commission to supervise general elections for the election of a new president, executive and legislature for the country.²²⁵

Although the government claimed that the President was unaware of the payments, Agbozo contended that this was immaterial. According to God, Agbozo claimed, "the King or President of the nation is the one with delegated divine authority and power enshrined in the people's trust to make laws, establish, administer and supervise peace, righteousness, judgement, justice and equity in the land."²²⁶ Therefore, the President was morally responsible. Agbozo insisted that the President had to resign because he had lost the spiritual, legal and moral right to supervise any enquiry into the payment.²²⁷

The case as a whole had significant implications, and dogged the Mills government and the NDC throughout the 2012 election and beyond. The key point for this thesis, however,

²²³ See John Dramani Mahama, "White Paper on the Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Payments from Public Funds Arising from Judgment Debts and Akin Matters" (Government of Ghana, November 2015), 3–5. Later investigations into the payments of judgment debts since 1992 by a Sole Commissioner indicated that some of these payments including that of Woyome entailed corruption

²²⁴ Following his dismissal from office, Mr. Amidu pursued the case at the Supreme Court as a private citizen and secured a judgement that declared the payment to Mr. Woyome as wrongful payments and ordered the state to retrieve the monies.

²²⁵ Enoch Immanuel Agbozo, "An Open Letter to President Prof. Atta Mills and Government of Ghana," February, 27, 2012,

<http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/An-Open-Letter-To-President-Prof-Atta-Mills-And-Government-Of-Ghana-230784>.

²²⁶ Agbozo, "An Open Letter to the President."

²²⁷ Agbozo, "An Open Letter to the President."

concerns the positioning of Pentecostal leadership in response to the crisis. While Pentecostal leaders had in the past prayed for the deliverance of the state from corrupt politicians and leaders, this case marked a profound shift in style and tone. Rather than a generalised prayer for deliverance, Agbozo utilised “prophecy” to openly confront the government on a specific accusation of corruption. This was a significant shift in Pentecostal attitudes and engagement. For although Agbozo is known for publicly rebuking political leaders through his prophetic declarations, this was the first time that a religious leader had challenged an elected President to resign over corruption allegations in his government during the Fourth Republic. Even the HMCs, which have often criticised governments for acts of corruption, had not previously done so—though they had previously called upon undemocratic and military governments to return the country to civilian rule, and for the removal of various serving ministers of state.

Agbozo’s intervention therefore represented a development in Pentecostal engagement. But further than this, it indicated a development in religious advocacy concerning accountable governance more generally. Unlike their counterparts in Western countries, most presidents in Africa do not usually take ultimate responsibility for the actions of their appointees. Hence, Agbozo’s call indicated a new pattern that was advocating a shift from the status quo where political leadership feigns innocence when their appointees are embroiled in corruption and abuse of office.

3.2.0 Pentecostals and Democratic Elections

The electoral process in Ghana is one of the key areas PMs are engaged in. The process may be taken to include: political campaigns, the making and display of registers for elections, the conduct of elections (voting), and the declaration of results. Most religious groups take a keen interest in the electoral process as a whole because of its critical importance for democracy. In the third wave of democratisation in Africa, lack of transparency and attendant disputes over elections have seen some African countries descend into civil war, for example in Liberia, Mali, Niger and the Ivory Coast. Hence, of all the key components of a democratic state that must be strengthened, the electoral process arguably attracts the most attention.

Indeed it is for this reason that the ACDEG prioritises elections as a key requirement that member states must implement. Member states are to hold free and fair elections in accordance with the Union’s Declaration on the principles governing democratic elections in Africa. Among other things member states are to ensure that they resource the electoral management body adequately to carry out its mandate and to ensure free and equitable access

to state owned media.²²⁸ More importantly, the Charter commits political stakeholders, especially political parties to accept the results of an election or challenge them in the courts.²²⁹ The following section addresses in detail Pentecostal engagement with various aspects of the electoral process in Ghana.

3.2.1 Peaceful Electoral Campaigns

The GPCC is one Christian umbrella group that has explicitly sought to nurture and preserve the democratic process. An example of its most comprehensive programmes towards ensuring free, credible and peaceful elections was rolled out ahead of the 2012 Presidential and Parliamentary elections. Funded by Strengthening, Transparency, Accountability and Responsibilities in Ghana (STAR-Ghana),²³⁰ the Council designed and implemented the Peace, Love, Unity and Stability Campaign (PLUS Ghana Project). Situating the project within its core mandate, the Council saw the project as part of its God-given responsibility to lead institutions and communities to stem incidences of violence and mitigate its impact on individuals and communities.²³¹

The PLUS project was initiated in response to problems that arose in previous elections.²³² In particular, the 2008 elections were characterised by armed conflicts and clashes in Tamale, Gushiegu, Ashiaman and other parts of the country. These clashes mainly involved supporters of the NDC and NPP.²³³ The country was thus polarised along party and ethnic lines.²³⁴ Close results in the first and second rounds of election in 2008 fostered a sense that Ghana was a deeply-divided nation, and it was this sharp sense of division that the GPCC sought to address through its PLUS-Ghana Project.²³⁵ The GPCC campaigned for peace through sensitisation workshops, rallies, as well as the creation of platforms for peaceful interactions among political stakeholders. The sensitisation workshops were focused on the various stages of the elections such as political campaigns, voting and counting of ballots,

²²⁸ African Union, “African Charter,” 7–8.

²²⁹ African Union, 8.

²³⁰ STAR-Ghana is a multi-donor funded organisation that supports the creation and use of spaces for collective civil society engagement, to increase the accountability and responsiveness of the executive and key state institutions at both local and national levels. It is currently funded by UK Aid, Danish Development Agency and the European Union.

²³¹ Jimmy Markin, “Keynote Address of the President: Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Council” (Peace Rally towards 2012 Elections, Bawku, June 23, 2012).

²³² Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Council, “Proposed Peace Campaign Towards 2012 General Election” (Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Council, April 3, 2012).

²³³ Acheampong, “Religion and Politics in Ghana Elections,” 158.

²³⁴ See Acheampong, “Christian Themes as Campaign Issues.

²³⁵ Interview with Samuel Antwi, January 22, 2015.

declaration of results and electoral issues like disputed results and the transfer of power. They aimed to help stakeholders deepen their understanding of the electoral process, and to prepare for potential disruptions to the elections – and by extension the whole political process.²³⁶

Two important aspects of the PLUS-Ghana Project contributed to its success: it was decentralised and targeted. First, the Project took most of its rallies, workshops and peace campaigns to trouble spots or flash points of election related violence. Second, though the project aimed at sensitising the whole populace, it mostly targeted the youth – recognising that political parties had previously recruited young people to engage in acts of intimidation and other forms of violence during electoral campaigns. Almost all PLUS-Ghana Project documentaries were undertaken by the youth, numerous peace messages focused on them, and most rallies and peaceful marches were youth-centred. A speech by Bishop Agyin Asare (then First Vice President of the GPCC) urging non-violence was aired on several media platforms targeted at the youth:

And so we are going in to elect our political officers, should not make us take knives, sticks ... against one another. Instead, we should remember that we are one people with just divergent opinions As young men and women, let us discipline ourselves; let us not allow our passions to rule us and make us misbehave. Instead, when we disagree with somebody let us sit down and talk. Let's make this election peaceful. With God being our help, we can do it and shame the devil. God bless you.²³⁷

Asigiri has noted that the peace campaign took advantage of the respect that is accorded religious institutions by the Ghanaian society and used this moral leverage to appeal to the sensibilities of the general public, especially the youth in conflict-prone areas.²³⁸ The Council attributes the absence of major electoral violence during the 2012 elections to the influence of the PLUS-Ghana Project.²³⁹

3.2.2 Mediating Electoral Disputes

The Pentecostal churches have also been instrumental in mediating on disagreements that come up during and after the electoral process. One such dispute arose with the creation of new constituencies ahead of the 2012 elections. Opposition parties contested the Electoral Commission's decision to create forty-five new constituencies six months before the election. They accused the Electoral Commission (EC) of manipulating the geographic boundaries of the various districts to advantage the ruling party, the NDC. According to the

²³⁶ Markin, "Key Note of GPCC."

²³⁷ Charles Agyinasare, "Peace Message," ec12one tv, November 23, 2012, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YNGY3GN0HwQ>.

²³⁸ Interview with Asigiri.

²³⁹ Interview with Asigiri

NPP, most of the new constituencies would be carved out of NDC strongholds, making it easy for the NDC to win additional seats. In an attempt to block the creation of these new constituencies, the NPP took three lawsuits to the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court upheld the EC's actions,²⁴⁰ but the NPP remained unsatisfied.

In response to this emerging crisis, the GPCC, with support from the CBC and CCG, stepped in quickly to attempt to resolve the issue by arranging a mediation meeting between the EC and the political parties. At this meeting, the EC explained its mandate to create the constituencies, while the other parties also expressed their displeasure. An agreement was finally reached that the EC should proceed with its plans, but also put a mechanism in place to forestall any similar occurrence taking place. Admittedly, the notice to create new constituencies was too short for political parties, most of whom had already concluded primaries and so had to look for funding to organise primaries in the new constituencies.²⁴¹

This mediation episode was a remarkable development because ordinarily, as an institution of the constitution, the EC was expected to be independent and not subject to the dictates of any person or institution. That the GPCC should attempt to intervene was extraordinary, but so too was the EC's willingness to consent to mediation initiated by such a body. It is worth noting that the Supreme Court's decision to uphold the EC's actions was based on article 47(5) of the 1992 Constitution, which mandates the EC to consider altering constituencies following the release of census results.²⁴² Hence, the EC was carrying out a constitutional obligation.²⁴³ It is significant that the GPCC intervened in large part to appease the opposition party, using the leverage of a prominent religious actor. Though there were issues concerning timing of the EC's actions,²⁴⁴ the NPP had no legal basis for its objection. Yet the situation was unlikely to be resolved amicably without external intervention.

This episode provides another instance of the GPCC taking initiatives while working alongside hitherto key mediators like the CCG and the CBC. In other words, Pentecostal leaders were exercising leadership – leading negotiations rather than being co-opted by the

²⁴⁰ Commonwealth Secretariat, "Report of the Commonwealth Observer Group: Ghana Presidential and Parliamentary Elections" (London: Commonwealth Secretariat, December 7, 2012), 8.

²⁴¹ The creation of the new constituencies was caused by a delay in the release of census results that was conducted in 2010.

²⁴² See "Constitution of the Republic of Ghana 1992," 45.

²⁴³ The creation of the new constituencies in 2012 was also not the first time. Sixty and thirty constituencies were created in 1992 and 2003 respectively. See Electoral Commission of Ghana, *The 2004 Presidential and Parliamentary Elections* (Accra: Electoral Commission of Ghana, 2005), 1, 12 & 16.

²⁴⁴ There was little the Electoral Commission could have done to change this. The census had been conducted in 2010, but the results were not released more than a year after the enumeration.

HMCs. This marked a departure from earlier times, such as the 1993 electoral dispute settlement when the HMCs did not consult the Pentecostal ministries, claiming that the latter lacked the skills to engage in such political arbitration. The case therefore demonstrates Pentecostal activism in the electoral process and more importantly a changed power dynamic. In this instance, PMs were evidently assuming some of the important roles and influence of the HMCs.

Another key feature of Pentecostal participation in this episode concerns PMs positioning as impartial arbiters in political disputes. One might question why the HMCs did not take greater initiative on this occasion as they had done in the past. The leadership of the Christian Council of Ghana and the Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference had in fact been criticised, particularly by the NDC and by Pentecostal groups like the Concerned Clergy Association of Ghana (CCAG), for taking political sides or being biased towards the NPP.²⁴⁵ Thus the HMCs' claims to be able to neutrally mediate between the Electoral Commission and the NDC government were evidently challenged. It was in this context that the PMs emerged casting themselves as impartial arbiters. Crucially, the GPCC's initiative enabled PMs to present themselves not only as alternative peace brokers but also as neutral peace brokers – a significant shift, having been tagged previously as supporters of undemocratic regimes.

PMs also played a key role behind the scenes in post-election 2012, especially after the NPP filed a petition challenging the outcome of the Presidential election. This was the first time the declaration of Ghana's Presidential results had been challenged in court.²⁴⁶ A similar disputed election in the Ivory Coast brought that country close to another civil war. The GPCC entered the fray through a campaign appealing to the populace to respect the verdict of the highest court.²⁴⁷ It used televised documentaries for this campaign similar to that of the 2012 election.²⁴⁸

²⁴⁵ See Dickson, "Church & Democracy in Ghana," 266–267. Emmanuel K. Dogbevi, "Parties Reject Christian Council Suggestion on Suspension of Campaign," *Ghana News Today* 8 November, 2008, accessed 2 January 2009. Joseph Nana Sarpong, Bishop Benny Wood clad CCCG as a politically motivated group 26 Jan, 2016, <http://www.firstdigitalghana.com/bishop-benny-wood-clads-cccg-as-a-politically-motivated-group/>

²⁴⁶ It must be noted, however, that after the 2004 elections, the then opposition NDC took the EC to court over the gazette of that election, which was thrown out by the Supreme Court in 2008 based on technicalities.

²⁴⁷ Interview with Ernest Asigri.

²⁴⁸ See Edem Tettey, "Campaign for Peace Post Supreme Court Ruling," August 22, 2013, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rl6Z4wQI39Q&feature=youtu.be&t=17.>; Kojo Impraim, "Campaign for Peace Post Supreme Court Ruling," August 22, 2013, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rl6Z4wQI39Q&feature=youtu.be&t=17.>

The other organisation that became involved in post-election issues in 2012 was the National Association of Charismatic and Christian Churches (NACCC). The NACCC, which became politically engaged after Duncan-Williams became its chair 2015,²⁴⁹ sought through its Political Dialogue Committee an audience with the then opposition leader, Nana Akuffo-Addo, and President-elect John Dramani Mahama. The Association wanted public assurances that they would accept the verdict of the court.²⁵⁰ Though Nana Addo expressed his dissatisfaction with the verdict of the court, he ultimately publicly accepted this verdict and congratulated the President. The NACCC believed its intervention was crucial in the NPP's acceptance of the Supreme Court's decision and even for the magnanimity demonstrated by the NDC after the declaration.²⁵¹

Acting alone, Archbishop Duncan-Williams had made a similar intervention in 2008 when those elections were also disputed, albeit less formally, by the then incumbent NPP.²⁵² Duncan-Williams was one of the first church ministers to speak out as tensions rose following the disputed 28 December 2008 runoff. At that time, most religious leaders, including HMCS, were reluctant to make public declarations about the electoral process, notwithstanding the behind-the-scene mediations by some HMCS leaders.²⁵³ Drawing on the biblical story of King Solomon (1 Kings 3:16-28), Duncan-Williams admonished the NPP and NDC:

It was the woman who conceded in order to save the child who won the child and the place in history.... So, conceding does not necessarily mean that the one conceding is the vanquished. Conceding in a reasonable timeframe to save the nation from violent conflicts is a mark of maturity and the desire to foster an atmosphere of peace.²⁵⁴

The NPP after this press release accepted the outcome of the run off, though it had earlier filed an injunction seeking to restrain the Electoral Commission from declaring the election results in the High court.²⁵⁵ Duncan-Williams's intervention was timely since the NDC, which suspected that the NPP wanted to manipulate the results of the election, picketed at the premises

²⁴⁹ Interview with Gideon Titi-Ofei, 10 February, 2015.

²⁵⁰ Titi-Ofei with Gideon Titi-Ofei.

²⁵¹ Titi-Ofei with Gideon Titi-Ofei.

²⁵² This very case did not run its full course because the NPP subsequently redrew from the case.

²⁵³ Interview with Fred Degbee, March 17, 2010 reference from Acheampong, "Religion and Politics in Ghana Elections," 158.

²⁵⁴ Ghana News Agency, "Duncan Appeals to NPP, NDC to Accept EC's Results," *Ghana News Agency*, January 2, 2009.

²⁵⁵ In the 2008 elections, a re-run in the Tain Constituency (on 2 January, 2009) became necessary because collated results by the E.C. from 229 constituencies out of 230 indicated the results from the run-off were too close to declare a winner. See Xan Rice, "Ghana's 'Too Close to Call' Election Delayed by Vote-Rigging Claims," *The Guardian*, December 31, 2008, 1 & 3.

of the Electoral Commission to put pressure on the Commission to declare the results in their favour.

3.2.3 *Aspiring for the Presidency*

Pentecostal leaders have not only been engaged in the promotion of peaceful elections and the settlement of electoral disputes, they have also sought to engage the electoral process as political candidates. As in Latin America, Ghanaian Pentecostal leaders have run as presidential candidates during the Fourth Republic, though to date without success.²⁵⁶ Notably, prior to Pentecostal initiatives, no other Christian church leaders had vied for such high office. The very first attempt was by Kwabena Darko, the eventual presidential candidate of the National Independent Party in the 1992 elections. He tried to use his Pentecostal credentials and experience to woo Pentecostal and other Christian voters. Darko was the Founder and President of the Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship in Ghana (a parachurch group) and an elder in the AoG-G.²⁵⁷ This placed him ahead of other candidates who did not have similar 'religious credentials.'

Ahead of the 1992 elections, the HMCs leadership had asked the electorates to vote for a 'God fearing' leader. This was widely regarded as an expression of opposition to Rawlings, whom the HMCs opposed because of the brutalities associated with the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) and many previous confrontations with Rawlings' regime. In response, Rawlings openly declared he was not a 'God fearing man, but a God loving person,'²⁵⁸ and criticised the HMCs for creating unnecessary fear of God to serve their own purpose.²⁵⁹ Nevertheless, the HMCs' call created an opening which Kwabena Darko exploited. Other contenders in the 1992 campaign were also forced to find ways to present themselves as 'God fearing' persons.²⁶⁰ For instance, Dr George Hagan, another candidate in the race of the National Independent Party, reportedly "struggled to rival Darko's Christian credentials in private advertisements run by friends".²⁶¹ One of these, sponsored by Dr Evans Boateng, highlighted Dr Hagan's past service to the Catholic Church. The NPP's presidential candidate also honoured all Christian invitations to speak and reminded the populace of his Christian

²⁵⁶ Freston, *Evangelicals and Politics in AALA*, 145. See also Pew Research, "Spirit and Power.

²⁵⁷ Elom Dovlo, "Religion and Politics in Ghana's Presidential Elections," *Uhuru Magazine*, January 1993, 43.

²⁵⁸ Elom Dovlo, "Religion and the Politics of Fourth Republican Elections in Ghana (1992, 1996)," *Ghana Bulletin of Theology* 1, no. 1 (2006): 10.

²⁵⁹ Dovlo, "4th Republic Election."

²⁶⁰ Dovlo, "Presidential Elections," 42.

²⁶¹ Dovlo, "4th Republic Election," 7.

background by using his Christian name, Albert, instead of Adu Boahen that he was usually publicly referred to.²⁶² None of these candidates fared particularly well. Darko's flamboyant lifestyle in the name of Pentecostal prosperity conflicted with the socialist ideology of the National Independent Party, contributing to questions about his socialist credentials. In the end, he secured only 2.9% of votes.

Other Pentecostal leaders have subsequently attempted to run for President. Prophet Daniel Yaw Nkansah, for example, set up the New Vision Party in 2008, with the aim of standing as the Party's presidential candidate. The party was formed with Nkansah's church, New Vision Pentecostal Church, as its main political base. Although Nkansah denied that New Vision was a religious party, for fear of being disqualified (Ghana's electoral laws do not allow the formation of parties on religious lines), the base of the party and his own public utterances suggested otherwise.²⁶³ For instance, Nkansah continuously claimed during his campaign that he had been sent by God, and that God was going to guide him to rule because he was uneducated. Referencing Proverbs 29:2, he emphasised that because he was a 'God fearing leader,' he was going to bring prosperity and happiness to Ghanaians.²⁶⁴ However, in the end, he did not contest the 2008 elections because he was late in filing complete nomination papers, leading to his disqualification.²⁶⁵ The party itself received negligible support (0.01%) in 2012.²⁶⁶

It is worth noting that since 2008, the last two Presidents of Ghana have been members of the PMs. However, their success depended on more than their Pentecostal identity alone. The track record of the party on whose ticket they ran, and their political experience, were also essential considerations. The late President Mills and Former President John Mahama ran on the ticket of the NDC – one of the two main political parties in Ghana, and the one which has ruled Ghana more than any other political party in the nation's history. Both had considerable political experience in government.²⁶⁷ By contrast, first generation parties such as the NIP and the NVP have not tasted political power. Hence, while PMs may desire to have one of their

²⁶² Dovlo, "4th Republic Election," 7.

²⁶³ Issah Alhassan, "Politicians Will No Longer Rule: New Vision Party Leader Prophecy," *Ghanaian Chronicle*, July 8, 2008.

²⁶⁴ Ghana News Agency, "Party of God Receives Final Certificate," *Ghana News Agency*, June 6, 2008.

²⁶⁵ Daabu, "Ghana Pharaoh." In 2016 Prophet Nicholas Osei, the founder and leader of the Heaven's Gate Ministries has also indicated he will be running for the 2016 presidential elections but never picked up the forms to contest. See Adwoa Gyasiwaa Agyeman, "Kumchacha Forms Political Party: Names Apreku My Daughter as Vice," *Adomonline.com*, June 20, 2016, <http://www.m.adomonline.com/marticles/politics/kumchacha-forms-political-party-names-apreku-my-daughter-as-vice>.

²⁶⁶ Tom Lansford, ed. *Political Handbook of the World, 2016-2017*, (London: Sage, 2017), 573.

²⁶⁷ Mills was a former Vice President, while Mahama was a former MP and Minister of State.

own ascend the high office of a President, they do not vote for just any spirit-filled Christian, but take into consideration a variety of other factors. Furthermore, Pentecostal engagements with electoral processes are diverse; they are not solely focused on the Presidency, but include a range of other efforts at achieving influence.

3.3.0 Pentecostals, Rule of Law and Human Rights

Pentecostal leaders are not only interested in promoting democracy and good governance for the benefit of the general population, but have been involved in public advocacy on a range of other fronts. As Jeffery Haynes notes, their interests are partially informed by a quest to pursue and promote the belief positions of their ministries.²⁶⁸

Chapter 4 of the ACDEG—on the rule of law and human rights—entreats member states to eliminate all forms of discrimination, particularly those relating to “political opinion, gender, ethnic, religious and racial grounds as well as any other form of intolerance.”²⁶⁹ Among other things, states are expected to ensure that citizens enjoy fundamental freedoms and human rights, considering their universality, interdependence and indivisibility. They are enjoined to take steps through legislative and administrative measures to secure the rights of women, ethnic minorities, migrants, people with disabilities, refugees and displaced persons and other marginalised and vulnerable social groups.²⁷⁰ What follows is an analysis of how PMs are negotiating these issues in terms of demanding them as their rights, advocating for or against others and ensuring that governments respect these fundamental rights.

3.3.1 Discourse on Same-Sex Relation

One significant feature of the ‘Pentecostalisation’ of the Ghanaian public sphere has been an agenda to push moral politics from the fringes to the centre of political discourse. Debates about same-sex relations have featured prominently in this shift. While Pentecostal leaders have consistently opposed attempts to liberalise same-sex relations, it is their mode of argumentation that has been particularly striking. Significantly, they have tended not to promote their moral politics with biblical arguments, or by mounting up public prayer against what they deem to be a serious violation of God’s law. Rather, they have utilised national and international (secular) laws to advance their agenda. This approach represents a major

²⁶⁸ Jeff Haynes, “Religion and Democratisation in Africa,” in *Religion, Democracy and Democratisation*, ed. John Anderson (New York: Routledge, 2006), 58.

²⁶⁹ African Union, “African Charter,” 5.

²⁷⁰ African Union, “African Charter,” 5.

departure from their previous methods, which relied heavily on biblical reproaches or pronouncements of doom upon the wickedness of the world.²⁷¹ Religious arguments and warnings about the spiritual consequences of “corrupting” political morality have not been entirely abandoned.

This also represents a shift from the Pre-Fourth Republican period when they were co-opted to support the proposed laws of the regimes of the day. In the democratic setting, PMs are instead lobbying and influencing political actors not to initiate a law that would permit same-sex relations. Indeed, the PMs seek to advocate for the nation to see same-sex relations through the lens of the ‘Christian understanding’ of morality.²⁷² However, Pentecostal leaders no longer expect to win debates with religious arguments alone. In this sense, PMs have embraced Ghana’s status as a “secular state” and the requirement to act within the context of secular state and international law.

One of the Christian groups that oppose the legalisation of same-sex relations is the Pentecostal umbrella group called the Concerned Clergy Association of Ghana (CCAG). The CCAG have taken their opposition into new public spaces – including social media, radio and television – while at the same time changing their emphasis from biblical to secular arguments based on existing national and international legislation. Their strategy can be classified as an advocate campaign to counter that of the LGBT community, which has through its international networks promoted legalisation of same-sex relations in Ghana.²⁷³ The CCAG demonstrated this shift in their petition against a ministerial nominee for the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (Mrs. Nana Oye Lithur), who had openly defended the right of people with same-sex orientation. They also opposed the President's decision to reconfigure the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs, and its renaming as the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection. These arguments were contained in a Petition presented to the Appointments Committee of Parliament.²⁷⁴

The CCAG’s Petition made two main arguments. The first was that Mrs. Lithur’s claim that homosexuality is not against the laws of Ghana because the criminal code is silent on homosexuality and President Mills’s denouncement of the practice does not set aside the guaranteed constitutional rights of all persons amounted to saying that homosexuality is legal.

²⁷¹ Kwame Essien and Saheed Aderinto, “Cutting the Head of the Roaring Monster: Homosexuality and Repression in Africa,” *African Study Monographs*, Homosexuality & Repression, 30, no. 3 (2009): 127–128.

²⁷² Guy Grossman, “Renewalist Christianity and the Political Saliency of LGBTs: Theory and Evidence from Sub Saharan Africa,” *Journal of Politics* 77, no. 2 (2015): 342.

²⁷³ Prince Benny Wood, “Re-Concerned Clergy Association of Ghana’s Objection to Nana Oye Lithur as Minister for Gender Children and Social Protection” (CCAG, January 24, 2013).

²⁷⁴ These petitions were not consider based on technical grounds by the committee because they were not signed.

The CCAG concluded that by taking that stand, the Minister designate may be influenced by gay lobbyists and she was likely to compromise the position taken by President Mills and that of Ghana on same-sex relations.²⁷⁵ Secondly, it drew a distinction between human and civil rights, which they argued were improperly conflated by lobbyists for homosexual law reform. The CCAG claimed that human rights are bestowed upon individuals by virtue of their being human; they are universal, and cannot be taken away. Civil rights, on the other hand, are not universal, but tied to the constitution of specific nations and thus subject to national laws. According to the CCAG, homosexuality is a civil rights issue, not a human right issue. It argued further that homosexuality is an offence under section 104 of Ghana's criminal code, and should be treated as such.²⁷⁶

This argument made in this petition is an example of the Pentecostal shift from biblical or theological arguments to the adoption of secular arguments. The CCAG's arguments were based on the criminal code, executive decisions, as well as the cultural and moral norms of Ghana – which can be equated in some respects to common laws. Therefore, the Pentecostal campaign against the legalisation of same-sex relation is novel, and shows how PMs are not necessarily copying the approach employed by HMCs – on this and on similar issues²⁷⁷ – but rather employing new means. They have shifted from the HMCs' approach of confronting the executive and invoked instead the jurisdiction of another organ of state (legislature). They seem to be signalling that where particular organs of state are 'complicit' on an issue, it is better to utilise checks and balances within the system – in this case invoking the jurisdiction of the organ of state that has oversight responsibility for the executive.

Before and after these petitions, the CCAG sustained its campaign against same-sex relations. As Benny Wood's Facebook post on same-sex marriage at beginning of this chapter illustrated, Ghanaian PMs have transnational identities and affiliations, that engage secular and religious concerns at local, national and international levels. As debate over the legalisation of same-sex relations has attracted international interest, Ghanaian PMs have waded into its debate on various platforms. When President Mahama and more recently President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo Addo failed to categorically say that Ghana would not legalise same-sex relations, Pentecostal groups criticised them. This forced them to clarify their positions and to

²⁷⁵ Wood, "CCAG Objection."

²⁷⁶ Wood, "CCAG Objection."

²⁷⁷ On abortion, see for example Myjoyonline, "Oye Lithur Is a Coward, Lacks Integrity and Must Be Rejected—Presby Moderator," *Modern Ghana*, January 31, 2013, <https://www.modernghana.com/news/442686/oye-lithur-is-a-coward-lacks-integrity-and-must-be-rejected.html>.

assure the nation that they had no intention of legalising same-sex relations.²⁷⁸ As Wood explained to the present author, the LGBT movement has strong connections in various organisations and media. The CCAG's resolve is to counter the LGBT community's gains by targeting the same potential lobby groups, especially those in government who have the power to initiate, implement and make laws. Wood notes:

We have also been able to stop this government from compromising on the issue of homosexuality. We influenced the President (Prof. Mills) to come out publicly to state the nation's position on it. We have also engaged Members of Parliament who have given us firm assurance that as long as they remain in that capacity, nothing on homosexuality will ever be brought to the parliament house for discussion. At the end of the day it was a successful advocacy. I am emphasising the issue of homosexuality because the people of the West has influenced a lot of nations through aid and financial support to compromise their values and to accept this practice as normal God given practice and we belief that is it is not and we did something about it (and) the result was very good.²⁷⁹

This lobbying and media advocacy against the legalisation of same-sex relations has made discourse on sexual orientation a salient issue in public discourse generally, with attendant implications for political actors in Africa.²⁸⁰ This is evident in a 2015 study of 28 African countries including Ghana which suggested that one reason for the uneven upward trend in the political saliency of LGBT relates to the rapid growth of Pentecostalism.²⁸¹

3.3.2 Asserting Religious Rights

PMs have also moved from the days of praying for God's intervention – when they considered themselves to be persecuted – or keeping quiet altogether, to challenging laws that do not safeguard their interests. One notable example of this change relates to the right to worship. The preamble to the GPCC's constitution speaks of “our right to profess, manifest and protect our faith”. This emphasis highlights “religious freedom” as a central area of concern for the GPCC, and it is one that has been repeatedly invoked in recent years.²⁸²

A key test of concerns related to the freedom to worship has centred on a ban on drumming and noise-making in the Accra Metropolis (Greater Accra Region) between the months of May-June. This ban is an indigenous law instituted by the Ga Traditional Council, and is one of a number of such laws that PMs have vehemently opposed. The ban involves a

²⁷⁸ See Austin Brakopowers, “We Won't Legalise Homosexuality – Gov't Clarifies Position,” News, *Myjoyonline*, November 27, 2017 and Ghana Web, “President Mahama Speaks: Homosexuality Is Criminal,” General News, *Ghana Web*, February 1, 2013.

²⁷⁹ Interview with Wood

²⁸⁰ Grossman, “Saliency of LGBTs,” 338.

²⁸¹ The same study also shows that on average, PMs have more conservative views on social issues than other streams of Christianity. See Grossman, “Saliency of LGBTs,” 337.

²⁸² Ghana Pentecostal Council, “Ghana Pentecostal Council Constitution,” 8.

period of quietness after the ritual of sowing maize and yam. Funerals, dancing, drumming and noise-making are not allowed during this period.²⁸³ PMs have resisted attempts to compel them to observe the ban, basing their arguments on Article 26 (1) of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana which states that “every person is entitled to enjoy, practice, profess, maintain and promote any culture, language, tradition or religion subject to the provisions of this Constitution.”²⁸⁴ By contrast, most HMCs have co-operated with the ban by limiting their worship to the confines of their premises.²⁸⁵ Indeed, Annor Yeboah had indicated in a press conference that the enforcement of the ban represented a ‘coup d’état’ to the 1992 republican constitution, the rule of law, and above all the freedoms and liberties of Christians and their faith. He called on Christians to arm themselves to the teeth by putting on the armour of God to defend the Church, the constitution and ourselves.”²⁸⁶

PMs’ refusal to comply has led to annual conflicts with the Ga Traditional Council. These conflicts escalated in the 1990s and the early 2000s during a period of particularly rapid Pentecostal growth, especially within the Charismatic strand.²⁸⁷ Clashes in Accra have increased over the years because Accra is a cosmopolitan city. The ban is easier to enforce in rural communities.²⁸⁸ Although in the rural areas, there is a sizeable population of people who adhere to an “imported religion” like Christianity or Islam, they are more likely to comply with a ban because they perceive it as their culture or tradition. However, the case is different in cosmopolitan areas. For instance, most of the people residing in Accra do not regard the traditions of the Gas as theirs, and therefore may not comply. Consequently, PMs see the observance of the ban as forcing them to adhere to a faith they do not belong to because they deem it a religion rather than a culture or tradition.

Initial attempts at resolving these conflicts were unsuccessful. For instance, the Accra Metropolitan Assembly formed a task force to monitor the ban, in which the Christian churches were to keep their noise level down as prescribed in the Abatement of Noise (1995) by-law of

²⁸³ J. Mary Fields, *Traditional Custom and Medicine of the Ga People* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1937), 2.

²⁸⁴ Government of Ghana, “1992 Constitution,” 27.

²⁸⁵ Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, “To Drum or Not to Drum: Traditional Festivals, Christianity and the Clashes over Religious Silence in Ghana,” *Trinity Theological Seminary* 15, no. 2 (2005): 115.

²⁸⁶ See Press Conference held by ‘Members and Leaders of Christ Apostolic Church International in reaction to the ban on religious freedom by traditional believers’ at Osu, Accra, on May 12, 2001. Quoted from Abamfo Ofori Atiemo, “Fighting for the Rights of the Gods: Tradition, Religious Human Rights, and the Modern Nation-State in Africa- A Ghanaian Case Study,” in *Trajectories of Religion in Africa: Essays in Honour of John S. Pobee*, 48th ed., Studies in World Christianity and Interreligious Relations (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2014), 236.

²⁸⁷ It is not surprising that one of the first churches that were vandalised in 1998 included a Charismatic Church – Light House Chapel

²⁸⁸ Kwabena J. Darkwa Amanor, “Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches in Ghana and the African Culture: Confrontation or Compromise?” *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 18, no. 1 (2009): 133.

the Accra Metropolitan Assembly. Yet, this did not resolve the matter as the churches did not comply accordingly.

The PMs' insistent non-compliance and the Traditional Council's attempts to enforce the ban forced the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice, which has oversight responsibility for individual and groups rights, to intervene in 1999. The Human Rights Commission determined that "while the ban on drumming and noise making is constitutionally protected, it does not extend to other groups, nor does it overrule the right of people practicing different religions to exercise their own freedom of worship."²⁸⁹

This ruling did not resolve the conflict, as there were continuous attacks and PMs who felt constrained decided to protect themselves. It is reported, for example, that when the Traditional Council's task force invaded the Christ Apostolic Church branch in Osu, Rev. Augustine Annor Yeboah (the Minister in Charge and then General Secretary of the Christ Apostolic Church) responded by firing warning shots.²⁹⁰ This forced the Government to act. A mediating team was instituted, and prosecutions commenced against some of the people who invaded the church.

The PMs' assertion of religious rights in such ways represent a significant departure from the HMCs' attitude of compromising by observing the ban in full – that is, by not clapping hands or using other instruments like drums, organs and guitars during their services. The PMs have continued, however. While they have been part of the Christian delegation that initiated moves for an amicable settlement of conflicts, they have not been willing to compromise on their freedom of worship.

On the one hand, the PMs' attitude towards the ban should not only be seen as an assertion of their right to worship but a tacit attempt to take advantage of the law to reduce the influence of African Indigenous Religions (AIRs) – a faith group that PMs have consistently demonised. On the other hand, the Traditional Council's insistence on enforcing the ban can be viewed as a form of retaliation. Pentecostal worship is well known for its use of modern musical instruments that generate considerable noise. The Traditional Council has over the years complained about PMs' open condemnation and demonization of AIRs. Thus, enforcement of the ban may well be regarded as a reaction to this demonization.

PMs are not only taking advantage of democratic culture to insist on their right to worship and manifest their faith. They have also taken advantage of it to publicly condemn and

²⁸⁹ Ghana Web, "Commission on human rights calls for cultural review" *General News*, (Accra: 18 May 1999).

²⁹⁰ A.R. Alhassan, "Ban on Drumming Confrontation," *Accra Mail*, May 18, 2001, <http://allafrica.com/stories/200105180135.html>.

demonise other religions, especially AIRs.²⁹¹ Indeed, for many Ghanaians, the theological appeal of Pentecostalism relates directly to its successful negotiation of the African belief in spiritual causality – where Holy Spirit is presented as capable of dealing with the malevolent spirits which are believed to militate against human prosperity.²⁹² The PMs’ sustained attacks on AIRs must be understood in the context of ongoing battles between these groups concerning the efficacy of spiritual claims.

Resentment at Pentecostal demonization of AIRs helps to explain why the Ga Traditional Council’s attacks on the churches mostly target the PMs.²⁹³ Some indigenous religious practitioners have openly complained about this Pentecostal attitude.²⁹⁴ During one of the mediation processes following the attack on the Christ Apostolic Church, the Traditional Council drew mediators’ attention to Pentecostal leaders’ disrespect of their culture and the open demonisation of their faith, especially through the media.²⁹⁵ In one of such protest, Osofo Kofi Ameve of the African Renaissance Mission (formerly Afrikania Mission) noted:

(We) abhorred the use of radio and other mass media by Christians to insult believers of African religion. Some Pentecostal Churches are the main perpetrators of the act. It is disheartening to hear open insults, abuses and brazen misinterpretation of facts and downright untruths being told about our African religious heritage.²⁹⁶

In response, African Traditional practitioners have also questioned the potency and sources of power of some Pentecostal leadership, particularly those from the Neo-prophetic strand. Some AIR practitioners have challenged pastors to a public show of their powers; others have claimed they are the source of the certain pastors’ spiritual powers. Such responses signal a growing challenge to Pentecostalism and the resurgence of AIR, both phenomena which require further research.

3.3.3 Advocacy on Religions Regulations

PMs, particularly the older ministries, have also been engaged in advocacy aimed at influencing political actors to censure religious broadcasters. We are here pointing to an interesting phenomenon: While on the one hand PMs are busy seeking to invoke legal protections to assert

²⁹¹ See Rosalind I. J. Hackett, “Discourses of Demonization in Africa and Beyond,” *Diogenes* 50, no. 3 (2003): 62 & 69.

²⁹² See chapter 6 for a detailed discussion of the Pentecostal theological appeal.

²⁹³ Birgit Meyer, *Translating the Devil: Religion and Modernity among the Ewe of Southern Ghana*, Ghana Studies Review (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2001).

²⁹⁴ Atiemo, “Rights of the Gods,” 239.

²⁹⁵ Rosalind I. J. Hackett, “Introduction: New Media and Religious Transformations,” 2.

²⁹⁶ Ter Ellingson, “Accounts of the Ghana Drum Wars: Non-Christians Condemn Attacks on them by Christians, 1998-2003,” *Drum Wars News*, July 14, 1998, <http://allafrica.com/stories/199807140153.html>.

their freedom of worship, on the other hand they are promoting greater legal regulation – to restrain their competitors (in the language of the market), or false prophets (in the language of religion).²⁹⁷ Such advocacy marks a departure from the period where PMs mediated through prayer and teaching concerning what they claimed as ‘false prophets’ and ungodly ritual processes. In the democratic era, PMs are taking advantage of secular laws to push for state legislature to check alleged abuses.

The older PMs who are leading this move argue that the regulation is necessary because of the growing significance of Pentecostalism and the need to protect its image in the public eye so that it does not suffer credibility issues.²⁹⁸ They are particularly worried about religious excesses by some churches, especially ritual practices in their prayer camps, as well as churches about which human rights questions have been raised.²⁹⁹ PMs have encouraged their members to sanitise their own activities, yet they have also advocated for state legislation to rein in alleged false leaders among their fold.³⁰⁰

Consequently, member churches of especially the GPCC and NACCC, most of whom grew on the back of deliverance and other ritual practices, having now established their churches, are departing from their past. However, umbrella groups and statutory bodies face the challenge of regulating churches’ activities, especially nonaligned ones. Such difficulties are evident in the case of reported false teachings and excesses at the International God’s Way Church founded by Bishop Daniel Obinim. Obinim is claimed to have stamped the stomach of a pregnant woman during a deliverance session in his church. In another incident, two teenagers – a male and a female – were reported to have been beaten, allegedly for having sex, which resulted in a pregnancy. Obinim is not a member of any recognised Christian body that can sanction him, hence the push for a mechanism to do so, via the state, through a human rights lawsuit. However, state prosecutors are faced with the hurdle of finding witnesses. The alleged victims and key witnesses seldom regard such ritual processes as abusive, but rather as meaningful religious rituals to help deal with their ailments.

²⁹⁷ John Yaw Adu, Interview on Pentecostal Prophets, National and Political Prophecies in Ghana, Face to Face, February 5, 2015. See also The Ghanaian Times, “Churches Must Not Disturb Public Peace - Apostle Opoku Onyinah,” *The Ghanaian Times*, September 5, 2014; Myjoyonline.com, “Time for Regulation”; The Ghanaian Times, “Churches Must Not Disturb Public Peace -Apostle Opoku Onyinah,” Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Council, “Press Statement: Obinim Not a Genuine Servant of God” (Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Council, March 8, 2016); National Association of Charismatic and Christian Churches, “Press Statement: Charlatans in the Pulpit” (National Association of Charismatic and Christian Churches, March 16, 2016).

²⁹⁸ Interview with Antwi and interview Onyinah.

²⁹⁹ See for instance Propagation of False Teachings and Practices at the Edumfa Prayer Centre” (General Council of the Church of Pentecost, May 29, 2011).

³⁰⁰ Interview with Samuel Antwi ; Interview with Prince Benny Wood,

In these circumstances, the older PMs are advocating and supporting the speedy passage of the Broadcasting Bill that will contain sections on religious broadcasting that may help regulate religious excesses in the media. They have emphasised that their call is to help sanitise the religious sphere, especially within the media space, without curtailing people's freedom to access these services. One of their expressed hopes is that this regulation will force these churches to reform their liturgies for fear of a media house refusing to broadcast their services on the account of abuses in their ritual practices. However, a law to regulate church activities will be difficult because of the real difficulty in defining the boundaries of what can be considered religious and religious excess.

It is, however, important to draw attention to the fact that the whole push by the older PMs for a law to regulate religious practices can also be viewed in the context of organised groups trying to secure their religious and political leverage, which is being challenged following the rising popularity of neo-prophetic churches. It is this latter group that has mainly been targeted in reported cases of religious excesses. The call for the regulation should therefore be deemed as a ploy to curtail the rivalry presented by this new strand of Pentecostalism both in the religious and political spheres,³⁰¹ a subject that we will explore further in Chapter 4.

3.4.0 Religious and Political Implications

During the Fourth Republic, the participation of PMs has become more open and significant. The PMs' new-found interest in more direct political engagement effectively alters the dynamics of religious engagement and influence in the democratic setting. At the same time their advocacy on issues of human rights and law-making has taken religious advocacy in the democratic environment a step further. These have implications for the democratic setting and religious influence in Ghana. Some of these implications are highlighted below.

One key distinction that has arisen out of Pentecostal participation in the democratic process is how their leaders want the nation to reflect Pentecostal image. In doing this, they have succeeded in making issues that are of Pentecostal interest and usually discussed on the fringes of politics salient and central in political discourses. They have done so by not only

³⁰¹ Rosalind I. J. Hackett, "'Devil Bustin' Satellites: How Media Liberalization in Africa Generates Religious Intolerance and Conflict," in *Displacing the State: Religion and Conflict in Neo-Liberal Africa*, ed. James Howard Smith and Rosalind I. J. Hackett (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2011), 179.

complaining about them, but also confronting political actors on these issues within the confines of national and international laws.³⁰²

Pentecostal activism on issues like homosexuality, prophetic accountability and assertion of their right to worship has claimed a space within the secular sphere.³⁰³ Therefore, the Pentecostal agenda of re-moralising the public sphere is not to be understood in terms of negotiation with other groups only, but also a resolve to colonise the public sphere completely.³⁰⁴ This task involves reshaping the state to reflect the Pentecostal image.³⁰⁵ While Pentecostals have maintained their respect for political authorities in keeping with biblical injunctions, they have nonetheless taken advantage of the opportunities engendered by the democratic process to push for and promote their agenda. Their aim is to orientate political actors and the public sphere.

In this regard, PMs have made strides in courting the executive and the legislature, who have the power to initiate and pass law to their advantage,³⁰⁶ while at the same time promoting the enforcement of existing laws that stifle the progress and influence of other ‘religious competitors’ in the country. Therefore, while theological and legal responses may not necessarily stop a determined secular state from legalising homosexuality and punishing those who denigrate other faiths, Pentecostal leaders take consolation in the fact that they have temporarily negotiated with political elites not to pass any law that in their view will justify sin³⁰⁷ and take advantage of their right to free speech to undercut other religious groups.

Pentecostal collaborative efforts with other institutions are a sign of the Pentecostal shift from their hermetic posture to openness to other ideas without necessarily forfeiting theirs.³⁰⁸ By their willingness to learn and work with others they have had the advantage and benefit of the extensive time-tested procedures and processes of the HMCs and other civil society groups they collaborate with. They may be arriving late in the public,³⁰⁹ but they do not need to reinvent the wheel as far as these engagements are concerned. Their successful negotiation with support from other HMCs over the disputes over the creation of new

³⁰² Grossman, “Saliency of LGBTs,” 349.

³⁰³ Birgit Meyer, “Going and Making Public: Pentecostalism as a Public Religion in Ghana,” in *Christianity and Public Culture in Africa*, ed. Harri Englund (Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2011), 155.

³⁰⁴ Ruth Marshall, “God Is Not a Democrat: Pentecostalism and Democratization in Nigeria,” in *The Christian Churches and Democratisation of Africa*, ed. Paul Gifford (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1995), 247.

³⁰⁵ Marshall, “God is Not a Democrat,” 247.

³⁰⁶ Interview with Wood.

³⁰⁷ Interview with Wood.

³⁰⁸ Douglas Petersen, *Not By Might nor By Power: A Pentecostal Theology of Social Concern in Latin America* (New York: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2011), 230.

³⁰⁹ Antwi “Steward of Nations.”

constituencies and their influence in getting parties to accept the outcome of the Supreme Court petition concerning the 2012 election are a significant demonstration of the experience they have gathered in negotiations from their incessant collaborations with the forerunners.

But how has the Pentecostal participation impacted religious influence within the democratic environment, particularly the dominant influence of the HMCs? While a careful observation of the public sphere points to a reduction in the public activities of the HMCs, this is not only attributable to the participation of PMs.³¹⁰ Other factors include the levelling of the political field, the liberalisation of the media landscape and the rise of other civil society organisations including PMs.

Firstly, opposition parties which seemed to be at a greater disadvantage with the abuse of incumbency and a lack of proper preparation ahead of the first Fourth Republican elections, have since reorganised, and with oversight in parliament reduced the abuse of incumbency by the executive.³¹¹ Secondly, the return of Ghana to multi-party democracy, which liberalised the media landscape and the repeal of the criminal libel law in 2001 has given an unfettered freedom to journalists and civil society groups who can report political activity without fear of government brutality. Although the interest of HMCs may not necessarily be served by the independent media and civil society groups, it seems the HMCs have chosen to take a back seat preferring framers of the constitution to work and rather intervene when there is a political deadlock. With the mushrooming and the strengthening of all these groups, the HMCs are left with less ‘surrogating’ to do. In other words, the HMCs have not necessarily lost their influence.³¹² The Catholic Church’s Archbishop for the Accra Diocese, Gabriel Palmer Buckle has, for instance, argued that most civil society organisations are basically engaged in similar activities the HMCs were involved in previously.³¹³ According to Buckle, the HMCs will be duplicating functions if they continue to tread some of their previous paths. On this interpretation, the HMCs have shown the way and civil society and others can thus follow ‘the good old path.’

Notwithstanding this, while the HMCs have been successful in serving as a ‘surrogate opposition’ prior to the Fourth Republic, and largely been successful in influencing governments at the highest level during this period, it is the PMs churches that have presented

³¹⁰ See Acheampong, “Lost and Discovered Voices.”

³¹¹ Opposition parties boycotted the 1992 Parliamentary elections claiming the Presidential elections that were held early were rigged. Thus the first parliament of the Fourth Republic was made up of only members of the incumbent.

³¹² Acheampong, “Lost and Discovered Voices.”

³¹³ “The Church in Ghana: Gabriel Charles Palmer-Buckle,” *Super Morning* (Accra: Joy FM, October 2012).

alternatives and innovations in the democratic process. At present, it is the PMs that are, through television, radio broadcast and their publications, instilling political and moral values to people beyond their various congregations. PMs have employed and deployed media technologies that can reach a large audience.³¹⁴ An example is the ACI project on the Good Corporate Governance Series which was widely publicised. With this media strategy, PMs reach other publics outside their churches,³¹⁵ and they have used this advantage to shape the public sphere.³¹⁶ Gifford's assertion that the HMCs fought for democracy while the PMs have sustained it may be an exaggeration. Yet it can be said that Pentecostalism is the alternative religious force with an emergent influence.³¹⁷ As they begin to shape civic institutions through their engagement and activism, they are an important consideration in national and regional political life.³¹⁸ Pentecostal Ministries, therefore, constitute an alternative source of political and religious voice in the Ghanaian public sphere.³¹⁹

3.5.0 Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated through various case studies that PMs have shifted from their previous attitude of seeing the Ghanaian state as part of the wider world that was doomed to engaging more directly in democratic processes with a view to sustaining a democratic culture. In doing this, PMs are serving on boards of civil society and in the state itself, promoting democratic governance, settling political and ethnic conflicts, campaigning for peaceful elections and advocating against same-sex marriage. This chapter has also demonstrated that PMs have not completely abandoned or departed from their reliance on Christian beliefs in their engagement. Thus, during the period under consideration, they have made use of these beliefs to make a case for democracy to demand political accountability, and even as a basis to contest presidential elections. At the same time I have examined how under the guise of human rights and the protection of the image Pentecostal leader have taken advantage of the provisions

³¹⁴ Birgit Meyer, "Religious Sensations: Why Media, Aesthetics, and the Power Matter in the Study of Contemporary Religion," in *Religion: Beyond a Concept*, ed. Hent de Vries (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008), 709.

³¹⁵ Meyer, "Going and Making Public, 150.

³¹⁶ Paul Gifford, "The Bible as a Political Document in Africa," in *Scriptural Politics. The Bible and the Koran as Political Models in the Middle East and Africa*, ed. Niels Kastfelt (London: C. Hurst & Co. Publishers Ltd, 2003), 28.

³¹⁷ Rijk van Dijk, "Pentecostalism and the Politics of Prophetic Power," in *Scriptural Politics. The Bible and the Koran as Political Models in the Middle East and Africa*, by Niels Kastfelt (London: Hurst and Company, 2003), 156.

³¹⁸ Centre for Religion and Civic Culture, "Social and Political Impact of Pentecostal Movements" (Centre for Religion and Civic Culture, January 31, 2012).

³¹⁹ Adrian Hasting, "The Churches and Democracy: Reviewing a Relationship," in *The Christian Churches and the Democratisation of Africa*, ed. Paul Gifford (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 36.

in the 1992 constitutions to protect Christianity – both to defend their own rights, and to challenge opponents such as the AIRs.

These developments in the Pentecostal engagement with democracy in Ghana suggest that Pentecostals are not negotiating their core beliefs, but instead employing and embracing other secular forms of interventions to negotiate the democratic process to their advantage. PMs are demonstrating similar tendencies in their interventions in the Ghanaian economy, the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4: PENTECOSTALS AND ECONOMIC INTERVENTIONS

We cannot develop if we continue to depend on others for aid. The AU building is a monumental reminder of Africa's inability to solve her own problems. As Africans, we have crippled ourselves with our over-dependence on foreign help. We can only break the cycles of limitation when we reject the attitude of dependency! We cannot develop if we continue to depend on others for aid. Africa must take her destiny into her hands (Mensa Otabil, 2014).

4.0.0 Introduction

Paul Gifford has argued that PMs' emphasis on prosperity teaching and an enchanted worldview is a hindrance to Africa's development.³²⁰ This chapter argues that notwithstanding the possible negative impact of aspects of Pentecostal prosperity gospel teaching and an enchanted worldview to Ghana's development, there are other interventions of these ministries that are contributing to national development. The chapter is divided into three main parts. The first provides an overview of the political economy of Ghana in order to clarify the context of Pentecostal interventions. The second analyses how the interventions of Ghanaian PMs align with the economic policies being implemented by Ghana. The last section analyses the implications of these interventions in dialogue with existing scholarly views, especially those advanced by Paul Gifford. The chapter demonstrates that beyond their teaching on prosperity and an enchanted worldview, Pentecostal practice in terms of their intervention in the economy, whether intended, targeted or otherwise, aligns with Ghana's economic agenda.

4.1.0 Ghana's Neo-Liberal Economy

During the Fourth Republic, successive governments have implemented policies aimed at accelerating Ghana's development. In 1995, for example, the NDC Government rolled out the Coordinated Programme of Economic and Social Development Policy targeted at making Ghana a middle-income country within 25 years. This was commonly referred to as the 'Vision 2020' policy.³²¹ The medium-term strategy of Vision 2020, for a three-year period, focused on human development, economic growth, rural development, urban development and infrastructural development.³²² Despite some gains, growth lagged behind what was envisaged, leaving the country saddled with debts. In 2002, in order to receive debt relief, the newly elected NPP Government applied to the International Monetary Fund for Ghana to be declared a Heavily Indebted Poor Country. Two documents, the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy

³²⁰ Gifford, *Modernity in Africa*.

³²¹ Jerry John Rawlings, "Ghana Vision 2020: The First Step: Presidential Report on Co-Ordinated Programme of Economic and Social Development Policies (1996-2000)" (Government of Ghana, January 6, 1995), 52–82, <https://s3.amazonaws.com/ndpc-static/CACHES/NEWS/2015/07/27/Vision+2020-First+Step.pdf>.

³²² Rawlings, "Ghana Vision 2020," 52-55.

(2003-2005) and the Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (2006-2009), were introduced to help stabilise the economy.

These two documents were aimed to restore macroeconomic stability and reduce poverty. The focus was on good governance, increased productivity, job creation, human resource development, the proper distribution of national resources, and the provision of social services—especially those targeted at the poor and vulnerable in deprived communities.³²³ Additionally, the two programmes sought to create a platform for dialogue between the Government of Ghana and its development partners and donors, and to mainstream the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) into the national development agenda.³²⁴

In 2010, Ghana began implementing another medium-term development agenda, following a review of the Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy in 2009. This review revealed that there had been considerable progress towards macroeconomic stability and poverty reduction in the previous two decades, but that the economy was still challenged: there “remain several macroeconomic and structural challenges that limit the capacity of the economy to achieve sustainable improvements in the livelihoods of the people.”³²⁵ The new policy framework that followed was known as the Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda I (2010-2013) and II (2014-2017).³²⁶ The Agenda focused on seven thematic areas:

Theme 1: Ensuring and sustaining macroeconomic stability,

Theme 2: Enhancing competitiveness of Ghana’s private sector

Theme 3: Accelerated agriculture modernisation and sustainable natural resource management

Theme 4: Oil and gas development

Theme 5: Infrastructure and human settlements development

Theme 6: Human development, productivity and employment

Theme 7: Transparent, responsive and accountable governance³²⁷

It is within this neo-liberal context that PMs have sought to engage in the Ghanaian economy.

³²³ See National Development Planning Commission and Commission, “Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy II (2006 – 2009)” (Government of Ghana, November 2005), 2-5.

³²⁴ Kumi-Larbi, “Church of Pentecost.”

³²⁵ Government of Ghana, “Policy Brief for Consultative Group” (Accra: Government of Ghana, 2010), 1.

³²⁶ International Monetary Fund, “Country Report: Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper Vol.II” (Washington: International Monetary Fund Publication Services, July 2012), 1.

³²⁷ Seth E. Terkper, “Budget Speech: The Budget Statement and Economic Policy of the Government of Ghana for the 2014 Financial Year”; 2014 Budget Presented to Parliament, Budget Statement (Accra: Ministry of Finance, November 19, 2014), 2; Government of Ghana, Medium-Term National Development Policy Framework: Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda II (2014-2017) Policy Framework Vol I (Accra: National Development Planning Commission, December 2014), xvi.

4.2.0 Pentecostals and the Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda (GSGDA)

PMs have sought to participate in Ghana's economy on an array of fronts. These interventions are analysed in line with the framework outlined in the GSGDA (I & II) in order to demonstrate the ways that PMs have located themselves within the broader political economy. Within this setting, Pentecostal interventions can be classified into three main categories: economic activities, social welfare initiatives, and economic advocacy. For present purposes, economic interventions refer to activities which may meet socio-economic needs, but are run as businesses usually with the aim of making a profit. Social welfare initiatives, on the other hand, are help services initiated by PMs either for their members or the public more generally. Although such welfare projects may have an economic impact, as they can free some funds for beneficiaries to invest in other productive ventures, they are more geared towards attending to the needs of beneficiaries. The third intervention—economic advocacy—refers to campaigning for policies, laws, and regulations that have an impact on socio-economic life.³²⁸

4.2.1 Economic Activities: Education and Skills Training

Pentecostal initiatives in education align with one of the thematic areas of the GSGDA (theme 2)—enhancing the competitiveness of the private sector. Under this theme, education was considered an essential means for producing manpower for industry; educational courses were to be prioritised in the training of the “relevant and quality human resource development to provide modern skills and competencies required for the industrial economy envisaged over the medium term.”³²⁹ Government has lacked sufficient resources to fund expansion and improvement of facilities. Hence Public-Private Partnership (PPP) arrangements with faith-based organisations, like PMs, have emerged as means to expand quality educational provision.³³⁰ In this respect, PMs are collaborating with the government as private sector actors, helping to expand facilities and build new schools, particularly in deprived areas. From the government perspective, such risk-sharing reduces the incidence of budget overruns on infrastructural projects,³³¹ and PMs are already engaged in such project developments.

Like the HMCs, the PMs have made huge investments in the education sector—a marked shift from the years when aspiring to be filled with the Holy Spirit was prioritised over the

³²⁸ Sofia Sprechman and Emily Pelton, *Advocacy Tools and Guidelines: Promoting Policy Change* (Atlanta: CARE, 2001).

³²⁹ International Monetary Fund, Ghana: Poverty Reduction Strategy, 9.

³³⁰ International Monetary Fund, Poverty Reduction, 14.

³³¹ International Monetary Fund, Poverty Reduction, 50.

knowledge acquired from secular education.³³² In 2017, aside from the AoG-G, which is in the process of establishing a technical university, the other three churches surveyed in this thesis have established universities. As of 2015, the CoP's Pentecost University College (PUC) was offering over 32 programmes comprising postgraduate, undergraduate, professional and certificate programmes. Between 2000 and 2006, it had graduated 3,653 students.³³³ The ACI also manages the Dominion University College which offers programmes in computer science, business administration and theological studies. It also provides specialised training at the Centre for Research and Enterprise and the Language Resource Centre. In March 2016, the Central University College of the ICGC was granted the Charter which made it a fully-fledged university to award its own degrees.³³⁴

Lack of resources from central government means that tertiary institutions are unable to admit the number of students who qualify to gain admission to pursue these technical courses. Hence, PMs are providing opportunities for students who qualify but cannot gain admission into public universities. Pentecostal educational institutions complement government efforts generally. They also continue a tradition of religious initiative in education – the HMCs having initiated an extensive network of private primary and secondary educational institutions in the period when Ghana was still the Gold Coast.³³⁵

The courses that PMs offer in their tertiary institutions are more expansive than traditional Pentecostal priorities. Whereas the older emphasis was on the spiritual dimensions of daily realities and offering of theological courses, in recent times the Pentecostal institutions also offered liberal arts courses as well as ventured into new areas considered relevant to the current human resource needs of the country including professional and technical degrees. For instance, the ICGC's Central University College offers courses in civil engineering, architecture and physician assistantship. The AoG-G's decision to start a technical university responds to recent research indicating that Ghana lacks middle manpower, especially in the industrial sector, and in key priority areas of agriculture, oil and gas (GSGDA themes 3 and 4).³³⁶ Currently, there is a high demand for these skills in Ghana. This demand became

³³² See Larbi, *Pentecostalism in Ghana*, 446-47.

³³³ The Church of Pentecost, "General Headquarters, Areas, Ministries, Boards and Committees 2015 Executive Summary Reports," The 42nd Session of the General Council Meetings (Church of Pentecost, n.d.), 176.

³³⁴ Business and Financial Times, "Central University Receives Charter."

³³⁵ In recent times HMCs have ventured into tertiary education.

³³⁶ See the Forum for Education Reform, "Special Report: State of Education in Ghana," (IMANI-Ghana, 19December 2013). See also Sulemana Iddrisu, Eliasu Alhassan and Tony Kinder, "Polytechnic Education in Ghana: Management Delivery and Challenges," *International Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities Invention*, 1:6 (2014).

particularly apparent when the country discovered oil and gas, and expatriates had to be brought in to work in sectors that were reserved for locals as per the Local Content Law.³³⁷ Thus the PMs are focused on training for jobs that the market currently requires.

PMs, especially the CPMs, have also invested heavily in basic/primary education. This focus predates the GSGDA. Most CPMs, as ‘grassroots churches,’ have many branches scattered across the country. For instance, as a Pentecostal Ministry that began in the northern part of Ghana, AoG-G adopted a similar style to that of HMCs, attaching basic schools to their churches because they deemed English literacy as key to successful evangelism. In December 2015, the COP was managing over 80 Basic Schools, while the AoG-G had established over 130 basic and secondary schools with National Educational Units that coordinate the management of these schools. Although some branches of the Charismatic Ministries (CMs) have basic schools, these are not so much emphasised by the churches.³³⁸

Other Pentecostal initiatives in education also address key areas of government policy, including the aim to increase, especially access to female education (GSGDA theme 6). The policy direction requires the expansion of “incentive schemes to increase girls’ enrolment, retention and completion particularly in deprived areas.”³³⁹ Scholarships are one way the CMs have supported this policy initiative.

Although the CMs have fewer direct investments in basic education, they have made substantial investments in scholarship schemes to assist needy students to access basic and secondary education. For example, the ICGC’s Educational Scholarship scheme awarded over 3,000 scholarships to capable but disadvantaged students between the 1989/90 and 2015/16 academic years. These were awarded to students of various religious and ethnic backgrounds to pursue Secondary, Technical and Vocational education in Ghana.³⁴⁰ In 2017, there were 425 beneficiaries on the scheme, in 137 Senior High Schools (colleges) across the ten regions of the country.³⁴¹ The ACI established a Student Scholarship Foundation in September 2009. By May 2015, it had disbursed over 200 scholarships amounting to over GH¢ 114,000. These ACI scholarships are targeted at students with good academic backgrounds who are either orphans

³³⁷ The Petroleum (Local Content and Local Participation) Regulation 2013 was promulgated to promote the patronage of Ghanaian goods, increased employment of Ghanaian professionals by ensuring the localisation of job opportunities and to facilitate technology and skills transfer through training, research and development. See Ministry of Energy, “Petroleum (Local Content and Local Participation) Regulation 2013 L.I.2204, (Accra: Ministry of Energy, 2013), 4.

³³⁸ The ICGC, however, has plans of building a model secondary school in each region of Ghana, and have since 2009, built one in the Eastern Region of Ghana. See Central Aid, “Our Achievement.”

³³⁹ International Monetary Fund, Ghana: Poverty Reduction Strategy, 19.

³⁴⁰ Central Aid, “Our Achievement.”

³⁴¹ Central Aid, “Our Achievement.”

or wards of parents/guardians from economically distressed backgrounds.³⁴² The CMs have also adopted and managed basic schools in deprived communities. The ACI has, for example, undertaken building projects to alleviate conditions for four schools under trees between 2012 and 2014, in support of a major initiative of the NDC government (2009-2016) to eliminate such schools by 2020.

Some PMs are also involved in skills training for Senior High School graduates who are unable to progress into tertiary institutions. Such training is a key component of GSGDA theme 6, which focuses on Human development, employment and productivity, especially as this relates to producing manpower for mechanised agriculture, oil and gas industries.³⁴³

The AoG's skills training in the Northern Region of Ghana is contributing to realising this national vision. The training aims at reducing the poverty level in the region, a situation that will help stem the tide of movement of people from the Northern part of Ghana to the South for greener pastures. The Northern parts of Ghana have not seen the same accelerated development as that in the South.³⁴⁴ Hence, poverty levels in this part of the country are high. A 2007 United Nations Development Programme Report on Ghana's Human Development described the region as "harbouring the poorest of the poor."³⁴⁵

In collaboration with the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund, the Assemblies of God Relief and Development Services (AGREDS) of the AoG-G started a programme of skills training in response to the growing menace of child trafficking.³⁴⁶ A key objective of the programme, which commenced in September 2006, is to equip the beneficiaries with employable skills which have local demand. Beneficiaries usually undergo six months practical-oriented training in hairdressing, catering, soap making and crocheting, welding, carpentry, metal moulding, spraying, electric and auto mechanics. AGREDS also helps in identifying master trade's persons with whom beneficiaries would continue their practical training for a year.³⁴⁷ During this period a reintegration officer maintains contact with most of these beneficiaries and undertakes routine monitoring of their post-training progress.³⁴⁸ They

³⁴² Interview with Taylor.

³⁴³ International Monetary Fund, Ghana: Poverty Reduction Strategy, 20.

³⁴⁴ See Thomas Roger, "Forced Labour in British West Africa: The Case of Northern Territories of the Gold Coast (1906-1927)," *Journal of African History* 14 no 1 (1973):35.

³⁴⁵ Ernest Harsch, "Closing Ghana's National Poverty Gap: North-South Disparities Challenge Attainment of Millennium Development Goals," *Africa Renewal*, October 2008, <http://www.un.org/africarenewal/magazine/october-2008/closing-ghana's-national-poverty-gap>.

³⁴⁶ See Assemblies of God Relief and Development Services, "Northern Branch," 2016, <http://www.AGREDS.org/?ui=northern&more=read>.

³⁴⁷ Assemblies of God Relief and Development Services, "Northern Branch."

³⁴⁸ Assemblies of God Relief and Development Services, "Northern Branch."

also provide equipment and loan facilities to help them set up. According to AGREDS, most beneficiaries of this training have since gone on to start their own small businesses or have gained employment.³⁴⁹

These skills training programmes look more comprehensive and well-coordinated. This is in line with the Council for Technical and Vocational Education Training (COTVET) programme.³⁵⁰ AGREDS project, however, fills the funding gap by funding individuals through their loan. This is because currently COTVET project funding (Skills Development Fund) give priority to enterprises engaged in agribusiness/agro-processing and sustainable energy which limits funding to other class of artisans, such as those mentioned above.³⁵¹

4.2.2 Economic Activities: Healthcare

While PMs have traditionally placed great emphasis on faith healing, they have nonetheless made critical interventions in the health sector of Ghana especially through the construction of hospitals. This contribution is significant for two reasons. The first is infrastructure (GSGDA Theme 5). Pentecostal facilities are sited in the rural areas of the country where access to healthcare is limited. A study conducted by G.J.M. Boom Van den et al. in 2004 revealed that most rural areas in Ghana lack basic medical facilities.³⁵² The siting of hospitals in rural areas is a strategic decision by the CPMs; it follows the policy of the HMCs in bringing healthcare services to parts of the country that have been denied access to quality medical care for decades.³⁵³

The government relies heavily on church-run services to deliver healthcare provision, especially through the Christian Health Association of Ghana. The Association is a network of over 300 health facilities and training institutions owned by 25 Christian denominations, all of which receive government subventions. The association provides approximately 40% of the available healthcare in Ghana;³⁵⁴ PMs are closely involved in this, particularly the CoP and AoG-G.

³⁴⁹ Assemblies of God Relief and Development Services, “Northern Branch.”

³⁵⁰ COTVET is a state agency set up to coordinate and oversee all aspects of technical and vocational education and training in the country

³⁵¹ Council for Technical and Vocational Education Training, “Our Project: Skills Development Fund,” Council for Technical and Vocational Education Training, 2015, <http://www.sdfghana.org/index.php>.

³⁵² G.J.M Boom Van den, N. N. N Nsowah-Nuamah, and G. B. Overbosch, “Curative Health Care Utilization in Ghana: A Multinomial Analysis of Equitable Access Opportunities,” 2008.

³⁵³ Interview with Alfred Koduah,.

³⁵⁴ Abdallah Salisu and Vanessa Prinz, *Health Care in Ghana* (Wien: Austrian Centre for Country of Origin & Asylum Research and Documentation, 2009), 13, www.ecoi.net. See also Boom Van den, Nsowah-Nuamah, and Overbosch, “Curative Health Care in Ghana.”

The CoP runs eight health institutions which operate in the hard-to-reach and deprived communities in Southern Ghana like Kasapin in the Brong Ahafo, Kpassa in the Volta, Ayanfuri and Twifo Agona in the Central Region of Ghana.³⁵⁵ The health facilities of AoG-G are also mostly located in deprived areas of Northern Ghana. The unit provides community-based preventive and curative healthcare in 113 outreach communities in two districts. Their Primary Health Care Unit is responsible for the training of Traditional Birth Attendants (TBAs), Village Health Committees (VHC) and the maintenance of 20 outreach clinics in Nyakpanduri, Bimbaagu and Naswan Zone of the East Mamprusi District, and 44 outreach clinics in the Saboba Zone in the Saboba-Chereponi District.³⁵⁶

Secondly, Pentecostal interventions help to reduce the nation's high doctor to patient ratio. According to the 2012 Annual Report on the GSGDA (2010–2013), Ghana's doctor to patient ratio was 1:10,452, far below the World Health Organisation's revised standard of 1:600.³⁵⁷ This major shortfall has forced the government to rely on doctors from Cuba and other countries to augment the sector.³⁵⁸

PMs have also identified niche areas of service where gaps in government provision exist – often in 'unattractive' areas, where an ethic of costly service and ministry becomes central to provision. For example, GSGDA policy (Theme 5) gives priority to accessible healthcare,³⁵⁹ but is silent on incentives for health professionals who are posted to deprived communities. Yet many doctors refuse postings to deprived communities because of the poor working conditions. PMs usually give incentives to attract doctors to these areas, and also seek to appeal to doctors on compassionate and religious grounds, encouraging them to see their work as a service to God, which will lead to some form of blessing in the future.³⁶⁰ Theologies of blessing for good work and sacrifice are thus deployed in negotiations with health professionals as ministries seek to convince doctors to take up appointments in deprived areas of the country.

Mental health in terms of psychiatric treatment and rehabilitation for drug and other substance abusers is one area that has not been given much attention by the central government. As a medium-term intervention, government is expected to establish treatment and

³⁵⁵ Interview with Alfred Koduah.

³⁵⁶ Interview with Koduah

³⁵⁷ Ghanaian Times, "Ghana's Doctor-To-Patient Ratio Worsens," *Ghanaian Times*, June 26, 2014.

³⁵⁸ See Karima Saleh, *The Health Sector in Ghana: A Comprehensive Assessment* (Washington: World Bank, 2013), 192; Isaac Zvi Christiansen, "Improving Public Health Care: An Examination of the Nature of Cuban Government Assistance to the Ghanaian Public Health Care System" (unpublished Master of Sciences thesis, Iowa: Iowa State University, 2010), 36-54.

³⁵⁹ International Monetary Fund, *Ghana: Poverty Reduction Strategy*, 21.

³⁶⁰ Interview with Koduah.

rehabilitation centres for drug addiction and other psychiatric conditions.³⁶¹ These facilities are yet to be established. In 2011, the Ministry of Health allocated only 1.4% of its total budget allocation to mental health spending/services.³⁶² It has taken almost a decade of advocacy to get the government to commit to a legislation-Mental Health Bill to sanitise the sector, despite its impact on the economy in terms of loss of productive manpower.

Thus the adaptation of Chosen Rehab Centre (now called Compassion Rehab Centre) by Compassion in Action (the social services wing of ACI) in 2010 was the second of such centres to be established in Ghana.³⁶³ It is a Non-Profit Centre for the rehabilitation of drug addicts and alcoholics who have a desire to reform. The Centre provides a “hybrid intervention approach using the ‘Narcotic Anonymous 12 Steps system’ (Alcoholics Anonymous Model)”³⁶⁴ and can accommodate 50 patients.³⁶⁵ The ACI claims to have used this model to help men who are either addicted to drugs, substance use or alcohol.³⁶⁶ Some notable people who are reported to have successfully gone through the rehabilitation centre are Bishop James Ofori-Atta (International Missions Director of the ACI) and David Oluwafemi Adewunmi Abdulateef Fani-Kayode (Special Assistant Public Affairs and later Minister of Culture and Tourism and Aviation in the Government of President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria).³⁶⁷

We can also talk about the School of Applied Science that offers health related courses like physician assistantship, pharmacy and nursing as well as the planned private medical school to be commenced by the Central University. These are a timely strategic investment that will help deal with shortage of manpower in basic healthcare delivery in Ghana. In essence Pentecostal interventions in health are not merely supporting economic goals, but include steps that deal with challenges that government is yet to prioritise.

³⁶¹ Government of Ghana, Medium-Term National Development Policy Framework: Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda I (2010-2013) Volume I (Accra: National Development Planning Commission, September 2010), 103-104.

³⁶² The Ghana Ministry of Health, Full Report: The Mental Health System in Ghana, June 2013, 19.

³⁶³ Another similar one is Damien House Rehabilitation Centre, located in Fijai, near Takoradi in the Western Region. Damien House is a private facility run by the Catholic Church. See The Ghana Ministry of Health, “The Mental Health System in Ghana,” (Ministry of Health, 2013), 22.

³⁶⁴ The model is premised on the idea that “people can help one another achieve and maintain abstinence from substances of abuse, but that healing cannot come about unless people with addictions surrender to a higher power. See American Addiction Centres, “12 Step Drug Rehab and Alcohol Treatment Programmes,” American Addiction Centres, 2016, <http://americanaddictioncenters.org/rehab-guide/12-step/>.

³⁶⁵ Interview with Taylor.

³⁶⁶ See Nicholas Duncan Williams, *Prayer Moves God* (Middletown, 2016).

³⁶⁷ Interview with James Nana Ofori-Atta, April 23, 2015.

4.2.3 Economic Empowerment

There are both intended and unintended Pentecostal activities and programmes that empower people economically. This form of empowerment described by scholars as spiritual capital complements government's efforts in human development (GSGDA 6). In functional terms, spiritual capital is defined as "the effects of spiritual and religious practices, beliefs, networks and institutions that have a measurable impact on individuals, communities and societies."³⁶⁸ PMs are using their religious beliefs (writings and teachings), activities and institutions to generate direct and indirect economic opportunities and activities that economic analysts have either not paid attention to or are unable to measure. There have been a number of research works on the Global South³⁶⁹ that argue that "participation in Pentecostal churches fosters sobriety, new economic priorities, discipline and initiative, an entrepreneurial spirit, optimism and confidence in the protection of a heavenly father, all of which enable converts to cope with poverty and adapt themselves to unstable work conditions."³⁷⁰

Theme 6 of the GSGDA policy of generating income and enhancing productivity requires government to support the development and implementation of capacity enhancement programmes that take into consideration the specific needs of men and women in both the formal and the informal sectors of the economy.³⁷¹ Unfortunately, government's commitment in the informal sector has been abysmal. In this regard, the teaching programmes of Pentecostal leaders like Otabil that seek to empower members to remain resilient in the face of Ghana's economic difficulties to see opportunities in the midst of difficulties and to take initiatives to improve their current situation despite its religious slant may be substitute for that suggested in the GSGDA.

One of such teachings was delivered by Otabil in a series titled 'Gaining Access to the Corridors of Power. Based on the Book of Daniel, Otabil demonstrates how the main character of the Book of Daniel negotiated the laws and rules of the Babylonian Empire while in exile to become one of the respected people in that Kingdom. In the third series preached on 2 October

³⁶⁸ See Spiritual Capital Research Program, http://www.metanexus.net/archive/spiritualcapitalresearchprogram/about_overview.asp.html Accessed 27 Sep. 2012. See also Samuel D. Rima, *Spiritual Capital: A Moral Core for Social and Economic Justice*, (Farnham and Burlington: Gower Publishing Limited, 2013).

³⁶⁹ See the works of Bernice Martin, "New Mutations of the Protestant Ethic among Latin American PMs." *Religion* 25 (2): 1995, 102–117; David Maxwell, *African Gifts of the Spirit: Pentecostalism and the Rise of a Zimbabwean Transnational Religious Movement* (Oxford: James Currey, 2006), Dena Freeman, "The Pentecostal Ethic and the Spirit of Development." In *Pentecostalism and Development: Churches, NGOs and Social Change in Africa*, ed. Dena Freeman (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 1-38, Marshall, "'Power in the Name of Jesus': Social Transformation and Pentecostalism in Western Nigeria 'Revisited.'"

³⁷⁰ Lindhardt, "Impact of Pneumatic Christianity," 13.

³⁷¹ International Monetary Fund, "Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper Vol. II," 17.

2016, he taught that Daniel's ability to learn the Babylonian language (mastery of communication) and the literature of the Babylonians (mastery of the philosophy of ideas) as part of his training, saw him become ten times better than all who were trained to serve in the Palace of King Nebuchadnezzar.³⁷² In applying this biblical story to the current world order, Otabil insists that English has become an international language of the world and that no nation can develop or have access to the community of nations unless it masters the language and its philosophy.

Comparing the colonisation and the dominance of other developed nations to the exiling of the Israelites by the Babylonians, Otabil argues that Africans cannot insist on their own language, but must rather master the language of their colonial masters.³⁷³ He postulates further that the individual African stands the chance of easily gaining access and dominating the corridors of power like Daniel in Babylon if he or she masters the language and literature better than their colonisers.³⁷⁴ In essence, it is only by learning from those who dominate you that you can overcome their dominance over you.³⁷⁵

This teaching and that of others stand in the larger resolve of especially the CMs to help in the development of the human resource base of their members and others outside their churches. Thus we see the use of biblical teaching to inspire confidence in individuals and urge them to believe in themselves. This can have an economic impact on members of the church as to how to improve themselves in terms of furthering their education or starting one if they have none—an act that will in the long run help improve the quality of human resource in the country.

As a practical guide to achieving this, the ICGC has, for instance, designed a 20-year personal development plan. The original idea of this plan seems to have emanated from the 'Guidelines for Developing a Strategy' produced by the Council of African Apostles of which Otabil and Duncan-Williams are founding members.³⁷⁶

The Council of African Apostles was birthed from the conviction that Africa needs to hear a clear, concise and authoritative voice from the church which addresses governmental

³⁷² Mesna Otabil, *Gaining Access to the Corridors of Power* (Accra, 2016).

³⁷³ Mesna Otabil, *Gaining Access*.

³⁷⁴ Mesna Otabil, *Gaining Access*.

³⁷⁵ For similar teaching on negotiating the productive and unproductive values systems of individuals and cooperate bodies see Mensa Otabil, *Buy the Future: Learning to Negotiate for a Future Better than Your Present* (Lanham: Pneuma Life Publishing, 2002).

³⁷⁶ Council of African Apostles is a brainchild of like-minded Apostles from different parts of Africa. The prime movers of the initiative include Bishop Tudor Bismark (Zimbabwe), Dr Mensa Otabil (Ghana), Archbishop Nicholas Duncan-Williams (Ghana), Bishop Enock Sitima (Botswana), and Bishop Mike Okonkwo (Nigeria).

issues within the church and in national and regional matters.³⁷⁷ It is in fulfilment of this 20-year plan that CMs like the ICGC has developed a customised personal 20-year development plan for their members because the church believes that to achieve the set goals of the CAA, individual members must be taught and assisted in developing strategies for the realisation of the larger goals of the Council.³⁷⁸

Indeed, the aforementioned development plan is not merely a here-and-now project. Rather it also has some spiritual foundations. For example, the biblical basis of the 20-year personal development plan of the ICGC is premised on two biblical texts of Genesis 13:14–15 where God promised Abraham that he was going to bless him and his descendants and Habakkuk 2:2 where the Lord instructed Habakkuk the prophet, saying “Write the vision and make it plain on tablets, that they may run who read it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end, it will speak, and it will not lie. Though it tarries, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.” Otabil has argued that “God first showed Abraham what his future could be like. He then asked Abraham to act to possess the future. He also told Habakkuk to clearly write the vision. Similarly, individuals can envisage their future and write down the steps they want to take to achieve a good future. Otabil has thus concluded that in the same vein the current generation can be successful in life if they discover and write down their vision

As a first step, the plan requires the individual to make a summary of goals that they intend to achieve ranging from spiritual, ministry, family, health and fitness, occupational, financial/investment, real estate/infrastructure and societal impact/legacy, thus indicating the spiritual-physical nexus of PMs as explained.

Yet another practical initiative is the annual Africa Business and Kingdom Leadership Summit hosted by Duncan-Williams and his wife Rosa Whitaker Duncan-Williams (an expert on Africa trade, investment and business). It is a submit that brings together “African and global leaders to collaborate around strategies and solutions that (will) usher Africa into a new era of inclusive growth, global leadership, Christ-like compassion and sustainable security.”³⁷⁹ The

³⁷⁷ Council of African Apostles, “Guidelines for Developing a Strategy Council of African Apostles” (Council of African Apostles, 2015).

³⁷⁸ Council of African Apostles. Council of African Apostles sees the church as having been mandated to return Africa to the original plans of God as a continent that is blessed. To achieve this, the council aims at harnessing the church’s social, human and financial capital to create synergies for transformation and to influence broader political governance reforms across the continent (by intervening in the) “business sector firstly to reform it and also to ensure that it is working for Africa’s greater good.

³⁷⁹ Action Chapel International Ministry, “Africa Business & Kingdom Leadership Summit 2017,” Africa Business & Kingdom Leadership Summit, September 1, 2017.

summit, the ACI claims, is modelled on disruptive leadership that brainstorms on new ways of tackling African challenges and taking advantage of opportunities.

A key component of the GSGDA is the enhancement of competitiveness of Ghana's private sector to take advantage of the deliberate government policy of partnering the private sector in national development (Theme 2). To achieve this, government is expected to develop the capacities of the sector to enable them to take advantage of the opportunities that the policy offers. Hence the ACI, despite its religious slant, provides avenues for such capacities to be built as a key component of the summit brings together government (finance ministry) and state institutions to dialogue with the private sector.

This is a significant shift in the ministry of Duncan-Williams, who Paul Gifford has described as one of the key figures who epitomises the spiritualisation of socio-political issues. As will be explored in more details in chapter five, Duncan-Williams has not abandoned his beliefs in the intercession of God to bring about prosperity to his people. Nonetheless, his spearheading of these initiatives demonstrates his appreciation of the fact that aside from God's interventions, there is the need to take mundane steps to realising God's plan. As T.D. Jakes (founder of The Potter's House Church in Dallas, Texas and the main speaker at the Submit) notes, Jesus Christ did not only come to respond to the ailment of individuals but he also came with a vision that helps his followers succeed.³⁸⁰

Although there are no quantitative data on the progress and the success of these teachings and personal plans initiated by the PMs, there have been testimonies on various platforms (including Greater Works, Destiny Summit and Festival of Ideas)³⁸¹ of how these teachings are impacting and challenging many young people. For instance, the Business and leadership summit of the ACI, just like others, featured successful businessmen and women who preceded their speeches and practical teachings with how the application of Christian principles had brought success to their work and businesses.

One of such success stories that is known in Ghana is that of Albert Ocran and Comfort Ocran who were inspired by Pentecostal teachings and have, based on this inspiration, which is a significant spiritual capital, taken bold initiatives that have resulted in the establishment of Combert Impressions, which is presently one of the leading Publishing Companies in Ghana. The Ocrans are replicating these teachings for the benefit of others through projects like Festival of Ideas and the Spring Board Road Shows. The Spring Board Road Shows, for

³⁸⁰ Ghallystar, "Bishop T.B. Jakes: God is about to Shake Things up –African Business and Kingdom Leaders Submit," 4 September 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZIPfqpLNPzs>

³⁸¹ These are annual conference and programmes of CMs.

instance, target mostly second cycle and tertiary students with the aim of inspiring them to take up personal initiatives to set up their own enterprises after school instead of seeking for non-existing white-collar jobs.

In summary, the spiritual capital generated by the PMs is crucial because about 70% of Ghana's economy is private sector-led and thus such initiatives will help consolidate the need for more private initiatives which are in line with the neo-liberal economic policies.³⁸² As a matter of fact, many of the interventions envisioned in the GSGDA lend themselves easily to private sector involvement. Therefore, the introduction of a project to help people develop their lives independent or in collaboration with government will most likely yield some positive dividends.

4.2.4 Economic Activities: Funding Businesses

To help give meaning to what they teach their members, PMs are also engaged in providing funding for members to start or grow their businesses. By this intervention, PMs have moved beyond self-help and motivational work and now venturing into tangible economic investment in the small business sector on a significant scale. A key component of the Government of Ghana's partnership with the private sector in the implementation of GSGDA (Theme 2) is the development of micro, small and medium enterprise (MSME) as a deliberate policy for the private sector to work for Ghana, while they both share the benefits that will accrue.³⁸³ Micro funding, which has been identified as key to realising this goal, is limited because of government's excessive borrowing from the domestic market which has crowded out the private sector.³⁸⁴ These microcredits are ultimately key poverty reduction initiatives which the United Nations has through various pilot projects identified as one essential way of financing small to medium scale businesses in the formal and informal sectors of developing economies.³⁸⁵ This project revealed that "in many countries, microcredit programmes have proved to be an effective tool in freeing people from poverty and have helped to increase their participation in the economic and political processes of society."³⁸⁶ Thus this Pentecostal

³⁸² James Ferguson, *Global Shadows: Africa in the Neoliberal World Order* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2006), 10.

³⁸³ International Monetary Fund, Ghana: Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, 8.

³⁸⁴ The interest rate in Ghana stood at 26% as of September 2016. See Trading Economics, "Ghana Interest Rate (2002-2016)," *Trading Economics*, 2016, <http://www.tradingeconomics.com/ghana/interest-rate>.

³⁸⁵ United Nations Secretary General, "Report of the Secretary-General Microcredit and the Eradication of Poverty" (New York: United Nations General Assembly, August 10, 1998), 1–3.

³⁸⁶ United Nations Secretary General, Report on Microcredit and Poverty 3.

initiative aligns with government's policy of encouraging private sector participation in state initiatives.

In the midst of this difficult situation, banks established through Pentecostal initiatives such as Capital Bank and Credit Unions and Cooperatives of the various congregations are extending credit facilities to their members at lower interest rates. In the end, PMs are using their institution(s) to generate capital that are redistributed to members to enhance their business growth and productivity. For example, the AoG-G's in 2005 set up the Micro Enterprise Development Unit to provide financial facilities aimed at supporting "mothers of trafficked girls in a Lifeline project with microfinance with a view to empowering them to undertake sustainable small scale businesses."³⁸⁷ As of 2015, the unit worked with 34 women groups and has made 107 small loan disbursements to about 3000 women with a loan recovery rate of 98%.³⁸⁸ They claim that their support to the women groups has resulted in increased incomes, improved clients' ability to meet social obligations, improved relations with spouses and improved retention of children in school.³⁸⁹

Similarly, the CoP's 'Pentecost Corporative Mutual Support and Social Services Society Limited' (PENCO) also has over 40 active credit union societies in 28 church areas and 12 districts.³⁹⁰ Its objective is to provide loans to its members for provident and productive purposes at fair but competitive rate of interest and to build the capacity of members in entrepreneurship in order for them to succeed in their businesses. PENCO has since 2009 been extending loan facilities for business start-ups and expansion, acquisition of assets, and other emergency financial advancement to lessen the burden of unexpected debts on members.³⁹¹

Hence the PMs' initiative of helping people to engage in economic ventures albeit on a smaller scale helps reduce the dependence rates in the country as people move away from unreliable government/donor support that is only a safety net to generating their own income.³⁹² This will go a long way to reducing the burden on government and also compliment central government's poverty reduction strategy.³⁹³ For example, it will help cut down government expenditure on the beneficiaries on the Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty Programme

³⁸⁷ Assemblies of God Relief and Development Services, "Northern Branch."

³⁸⁸ Assemblies of God Relief and Development Services, "Northern Branch."

³⁸⁹ Assemblies of God Relief and Development Services, "Northern Branch."

³⁹⁰ Kumi-Larbi, "Church of Pentecost."

³⁹¹ Church of Pentecost, *Economic Empowerment*, 2018.

³⁹² Carolina Population Center, "Livelihood Empowerment against Poverty Program: Impact Evaluation," (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 2013), ii-iii.

³⁹³ See, From Protection and Production Project, "From Protection to Production: The Role of Cash Transfer Programmes in Fostering Broad-Based Economic Development in Sub-Saharan Africa," (Rome: Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, 2014).

(LEAP)—a social cash transfer programme which provides cash and health insurance to extremely poor households across Ghana.

In the end, PMs are not only taking monies from members through various church contributions in the form of tithes, offertory, pastor appreciation, donations, etc., but are also providing funding for their economic activities. This initiative is significant due to the high interests charged by banks.

4.3.5 Economic Activities: Employment and Job Creation

There are also economic activities that are generated through the ministries of PMs. Though these ministry activities are aimed at church promotion, they nonetheless generate economic activities and creative stimulus—something that is hardly evaluated. Some of these relate to the merchandising of church and generally capitalist teachings on personal investments. For example, there are benefits that accrue to the economy from Pentecostal conferences and their external networks—especially their relations with other Pentecostal leaders in the Global North. These connections lead to religious tourism and correspondingly promote tourism. Religious tourism takes place when conferences organised by local Pentecostal churches feature ‘itinerant pastors/ministers.’ This leads to the influx of people from around the world to Ghana which leads to foreign inflow (money) that are crucial for Ghana’s macroeconomic stability (Theme 1) before of high imports.

Conferences such as Greater Works of the ICCG, Impact of ACI, the Convention of Saints of the Royal House Chapel and Home Coming of Light House Chapel International lead to a lot of economic activities, especially in the aviation and the hospitality sectors, as there are lots of international travels and a high demand for hotel accommodation during these periods. There are, for instance, pastors and lay leaders who travel to Ghana every year to attend ICCG’s Greater Works Conference which usually features Bishop Tudor Bismark from Zimbabwe, Bishop Mike Okonkwo of Nigeria and Pastor Matthew Ashimolowo from England.³⁹⁴ Another example is ACI’s annual summit dubbed “Impact,” which attracts renowned Pentecostal preachers like Bishop T.D. Jakes and Paula White from the Christian Center in Florida.³⁹⁵ Similarly, when Archbishop Duncan Williams preaches or speaks at conferences organised by The Potter’s House, these are telecast live on popular viewing stations like the Trinity

³⁹⁴ See De Witte, “Altar Media’s Living Word: Televised Charismatic Christianity in Ghana,” 177–178, 200 note 4.

³⁹⁵ Pastor Chris Oyakhilome’s “Night of Bliss” also attracts thousands of people from around the world, especially within the African continent.

Broadcasting Network. Such activity is seen not only to promote the Pentecostal ministry involved, but also the nation of Ghana more generally.

Apart from the number of people that the PMs and their associates like schools, health facilities, and financial institutions employ directly, they also indirectly create employment in other sectors of the economy. The creative industry is one such sector. The creative industry, especially film and music in Ghana, has not been prioritised because of the lack of political will to harness the budding talents in the industry. The GSGDA (theme 1) identifies the creative art industry as one sector that holds high prospects for socio-economic transformation, job creation, innovation and trade. Comprehensive data on the size of the industry are unavailable.³⁹⁶ Financial investment and funding have been identified as a major setback to the growth of the creative art industry.³⁹⁷ Despite government's commitment, it is unable to adequately resource the sector.³⁹⁸

In the absence of this governmental commitment, it is the PMs who are sustaining the industry, especially in the areas of music and film. Gospel music and movies with Pentecostal lyrics and storylines respectively attract more patronage than secular music and movies.³⁹⁹ Pentecostal Ministries' gospel music and movies attract huge patronage because the lyrics and storylines promote the triumph of good (through God's intervention) over evil (the devil).⁴⁰⁰ In the process, PMs are indirectly creating jobs for various skills set within the economy including sound engineers, producers, actors/actresses, cameramen/women, editors, as well as song and script writers. It is worthy of note that government recognises the economic value associated with these industries and has thus prioritised the development of tourism and the creative arts as major industries that must be explored.⁴⁰¹

Another area where PMs' activities are creating jobs is the commercialised media. Most private media houses in Ghana, especially radio and television stations, thrive heavily on the

³⁹⁶ See Government of Ghana, Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda, 46.

³⁹⁷ International Monetary Fund, Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy, 33.

³⁹⁸ Artwatch Ghana, *The State of Creative Arts in Ghana: 2017 Artwatch Ghana Annual Report* (Accra: Artwatch Ghana 2017), 9.

³⁹⁹ See Fredrick Acheampong, "Christian Songs as Political Songs: A Study of the Growing Leverage of Pentecostals Songs in Ghanaian Electioneering Campaigns (1992-2012)" (New Historian Conference, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand, 2015).

⁴⁰⁰ Birgit Meyer, "Pentecostlite Culture on Screen Magic and Modernity in Ghana's New Mediascape" (Research Centre Religion and Society, University of Amsterdam, 2002); Birgit Meyer, "Impossible Representations: Pentecostalism, Vision and Video Technology in Ghana" (Mainz: Department of Anthropology and African Studies, Gutenberg Universit, 2003); Birgit Meyer, "'Praise the Lord': Popular Cinema and Pentecostlite Style in Ghana's New Public Sphere," *American Ethnologist* 31, no. 1 (2004): 92–110.

⁴⁰¹ International Monetary Fund, Ghana: Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, 8.

patronage of air time by PMs.⁴⁰² The mushrooming of different PMs has led to a lot of competition among the churches. The intense competition has led to most ministries resorting to daily radio and weekly television programmes to promote their churches.⁴⁰³ In fact, there are radio and television stations that were purposely set up to cash in on the high demand.

Outdoor advertisements and the publishing industries have all benefited immensely from the PMs. Most PMs compete with big corporate organisations for giant billboards in the prime areas in the regional and district capitals of the country. The publications and publicity of the programmes and activities of most Pentecostal leaders and their churches have also boosted the publishing industry, especially in the production of posters, brochures, books, among others. This industry has also created jobs for graphic designers, writers, steel workers, engineers and other associated support staff. In summary Pentecostal ministry activities has directly and indirectly created jobs for a sizeable number of the Ghanaian population

4.3.0 Social Protection

The GSGDA document encompasses the development of labour productivity and employment and population management (Theme 6) as well as human settlements development (Theme 5) as key social prevention measures aimed at reducing the rate at which people become social burdens. In a bid to improve social conditions, the Government of Ghana as a deliberate state policy is to develop “targeted social interventions for vulnerable and marginalized groups as part of a broad policy aimed at reducing poverty and income inequalities.”⁴⁰⁴ These interventions are aimed at alleviating the poverty among people who become socially disadvantaged mainly because of years of developmental neglect in their regions/districts and or as cushion for those who are affected by the withdrawal of government subsidies in some sectors of the economy (fuel and power) as part of the GSGDA implementation.

In recent times, the United Nations has broadened the concept of welfare with a new focus on prevention. It, therefore, talks of social protection, instead of social welfare. Social protection is a social intervention which is focused on prevention, management, and disabling of situations that adversely affect people’s wellbeing.⁴⁰⁵ The key components of social protection are the promotion of efficient labour markets, reduction of people’s exposure to

⁴⁰² Marleen De Witte, “Business of the Spirit: Ghanaian Broadcast Media and the Commercial Exploitation of Pentecostalism” *Journal of African Media Studies* 3, no. 2 (2011): 189.

⁴⁰³ De Witte, “Altar Media’s Living Word: Televised Charismatic Christianity in Ghana,” 178; De Witte, “Television and the Gospel of Entertainment in Ghana,” 148–62.

⁴⁰⁴ International Monetary Fund, Ghana: Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, 26-27.

⁴⁰⁵ See United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, *Combating Poverty and Inequality: Structural Change, Social Policy and Politics*, (Washington: United Nations, 2010).

risks, and enhancement of people's capacity to manage economic and social risks, including unemployment, exclusion, sickness, disability and old age.⁴⁰⁶ Social welfare on the other hand refers to "those non-profit functions of society, public or voluntary, which are clearly aimed at alleviating distress and poverty or at ameliorating the conditions of the casualties of society."⁴⁰⁷ In this respect, social protection is broader than social welfare—which most PMs are focused. Nonetheless, the PMs' intervention is vital, since it relieves government to concentrate more on preventative means by creating avenues that will forestall the incident of people becoming socially distressed while PMs and other like-minded groups focus on dealing with those who unfortunately fall into the socially disadvantaged bracket. Thus, Ghanaian PMs just like their fellows in Latin America also prioritise social services⁴⁰⁸ by providing a safety net for members of the society who are socially dislocated during the implementation of neoliberal economic policies such as that envisioned in the GSGDA.⁴⁰⁹

All the six PMs surveyed have registered social service wings which are managed either as foundations or social relief agencies.⁴¹⁰ While the CMs are mainly registered as foundations or aids, the CPMs are usually registered as relief organisations. Again, while CPMs combine the management of their social services with those of their profit-making ventures, the CMs usually separate the two. The CPMs seem to have adopted this combination because of their orientation that all these initiatives are aimed at meeting the social needs of their members and not necessarily to make a profit. Nonetheless, they recognise that some of their interventions, especially in education and healthcare, may have to make some form of profit or at least break even to be sustainable.⁴¹¹ Some of the welfare initiatives are either undertaken independently or in conjunction with other civil society organisations and benefit the communities where these churches are located and beyond. They usually include relief services, educational support schemes and community projects and programmes.

⁴⁰⁶ World Bank, Social Protection Sector Strategy Paper: From Safety Net to Springboard, (Washington: World Bank, 2001).

⁴⁰⁷ R. Dolgoff and D. Feldstein Understanding Social Welfare (New York: Harper and Row, 1980), 91.

⁴⁰⁸ See Hannah Stewart-Gambino and Everett Wilson, "Latin American Pentecostals' Ministries: Old Stereotypes and New Challenges," in *In Power, Politics, and Pentecostal Ministries in Latin America*, ed. Edward Cleary and Hannah Stewart Gambino (Boulder: Westview Press, 1998), 233.

⁴⁰⁹ Isabelle V. Barker, "Charismatic Economies: Pentecostal Economic Restructuring, and Social Reproduction," *New Political Science* 29, no. 4 (2007): 417-418.

⁴¹⁰ See similar works on these PMs' Foundations and Relief Agencies in Phillip Musoni, "African Pentecostalism and Sustainable Development: A Study on the Zimbabwe Assemblies of God Africa, Forward In Faith Church," *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention* 2, no. 10 (2013): 75-82; Richard H. Burgess, "Pentecostals' Ministries and Development in Nigeria and Zambia: Community Organizing as a Response to Poverty and Violence," *PentecoStudies* 14, no. 2 (2015): 176-204.

⁴¹¹ Interview with Alfred Koduah.

The Assemblies of God Relief and Development Services (AGREDS) coordinates all the social welfare projects and programmes of the AoG-G. Before the Services' incorporation as a company limited by guarantee in January 1991,⁴¹² the leadership of the church had, since the late 1940s, managed all the social welfare projects. As a church that sees social welfare as part of evangelism, the AoG-G through AGREDS, "seeks to minister to the material and social needs of the poor and underprivileged in society and to emphasise the truth of the biblical teaching concerning caring for the needy, alleviation of suffering, (and) social justice."⁴¹³ Among the PMs surveyed, the AoG-G has the largest presence in Northern Ghana with 80% of AGREDS programmes centred in that region. Though this may be because the ministry of the church began in that part of Ghana, their intervention is nonetheless key to successive governments' effort at bridging the huge developmental gap between the North and the South.

Established as Pentecost Welfare Association in 1978, the CoP in 1983 restructured its social relief services and registered it as Pentecost Social Services (PENTSOS) to reflect its new mandate. A full Directorate was created in 2000 within the COP structures to better coordinate its activities.⁴¹⁴ PENTSOS is focused on taking care of the social needs of members of the CoP and the society at large.

The social service wings of the ICGC and ACI are Central Aid and Compassion in Action respectively. Central Aid's main goal is to undertake a number of social intervention projects to bring about social change and transformation to people, communities and the nation. As "the bridgehead of the Kingdom of God on earth, (the ICGC sees this intervention as) a divine mandate and responsibility to demonstrate the wisdom and creativity of God in providing solutions to the issues of poverty, deprivation, ignorance and diseases plaguing humanity."⁴¹⁵ According to ACI, Compassion in Action was established by the divine inspiration of the General Overseer, Nicholas Duncan-Williams. The foundation was initially called Dominion Covenant Partners before it became a registered charity in 1996⁴¹⁶ Like the ICGC, ACI sees this intervention as serving humanity. Duncan-Williams, for instance, notes on one of the published tracts of Compassion in Action: "the true essence of our being Christians is best defined by how we serve humanity and that eternity will record these good

⁴¹² The Assemblies of God Relief and Development Services, "Who We Are," March 19, 2016, http://www.AGREDS.org/?ui=who_we_are&more=read.

⁴¹³ The Assemblies of God Relief and Development Services.

⁴¹⁴ Pentecost Social Services, "PENTSOS Policy Guidelines," 4-7.

⁴¹⁵ Central Aid, "Home," 2016, <http://centralaidgh.org/page>.

⁴¹⁶ Interview with Taylor.

works for profit.”⁴¹⁷ This underscores the fact that PMs aside the preaching of the word of God are also engaged in finding solutions to the daily challenges that confront their members and others within and outside the catchment areas of their churches.

Emergency relief services are a key emphasis in the ministries of all the churches surveyed. As a matter of priority, the GSGDA entreats government to develop a comprehensive insurance market that will rein in all sectors that are uninsured.⁴¹⁸ The aim is to create a Sector Fund that will cover the risks and pension requirements of informal sector workers.⁴¹⁹ Apart from motor and in some cases, health insurance, many people in Ghana do not have personal insurance and or life insurance. This is because the majority of the working population that are in the informal sector do not earn enough to meet their daily needs and as a result, are unable to take up insurance. The talk of encouraging the informal sector to insure their businesses and other related activities is only recent – following several fire outbreaks in major markets and companies between 2012 and 2014.

Additionally, the National Disaster Management Organisation, which is constitutionally mandated to provide relief assistance during natural disasters, is always saddled with financial challenges due to inadequate budgetary allocation and political interference in appointments to the organisation. Therefore, the relief services provided by PMs are vital to victims that suffer one form of disaster or the other.

Central Aid, PENTSOS and AGREDS are noted to provide such relief and other varied support services to communities affected by natural or man-made disasters, hazards or events that cause substantial loss or damage to life and property.⁴²⁰

In addition, they carry out social projects within and outside the communities where they operate to promote and support the social, economic, educational and physical well-being of the people. Several communities have, for instance, benefited from and have improved lifestyle as far as water is concerned and this has been made possible by the provision of the Community Bore Hole Project undertaken by Central Aid. Central Aid has, for example, constructed 20 boreholes fitted with hand pumps for 19 underserved communities in the Ga West Municipal Area of the Greater Accra Region.⁴²¹

⁴¹⁷ Nicolas Duncan Williams, “Dominion Covenant Partners Tract: Letter from Archbishop,” ed. Dominion Covenant Partners (Christian Action Faith Ministries, n.d.), 2. See similar interventions in the works of Jones, “The Making of Meaning”; Jones, “Penetcostals and Development in Sub-Saharan Africa”; Flory and Miller, “The Dream Centre.”

⁴¹⁸ The government of Ghana, *Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda*, 17.

⁴¹⁹ International Monetary Fund, *Ghana: Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper*, 26-27.

⁴²⁰ Central Aid “Our Achievement.”

⁴²¹ Central Aid “Our Achievement.”

The local branches of ICGC and Light House Chapel International (LHCI)⁴²² are also known for their free medical screening activities for the communities where their churches are located.⁴²³ Between 2011 and 2013, for instance, the ICGC branch in Taifa -Burkina (a suburb of Accra) sponsored the screening of some four hundred (400) people in the area. The medical outreach team screened for malaria, blood grouping, hepatitis B and sickling. A Light House Chapel International medical screening programme was undertaken as part of the church's evangelism drive in 2011 and 2012 at Fisea (a suburb of Accra), was more comprehensive since a whole mobile clinic was moved to the community. Doctors, lab technicians and pharmacists were on hand to provide health delivery for the community.

It is estimated that 30% of the Ghanaian population who are sickle cell carriers do not know their status.⁴²⁴ Therefore, medical screening is an important intervention because it is a preventive measure that helps in the immediate management and treatment for sickle carriers and in the long run reduces the incident of children born with sickle cell disease.

The PMs also adopt and manage orphanages. The Compassion in Action, for instance, manages two orphanages, namely BASCO Orphanage (or the Children's Home at Suhum) and the Chosen Rehab Orphanage. The BASCO Orphanage, which was established in August 1996, is currently home to over 220 boys and girls between 5 to 18 years who are cared for by a team of 27 caregivers. It offers primary and junior high school education on its premises where other children from the community attend school. In this respect, the orphans are integrated with the larger community. Most of the children at BASCO are orphans rescued from deplorable conditions. The others are from backgrounds of social neglect, malnutrition, abuse, and child trafficking.⁴²⁵

The Chosen Rehab Orphanage has 50 children in the age range of 2 to 18 years in its care as of December 2016. These children are mainly from abandoned homes. The orphanage is also home to a few women who have nowhere to stay. Compassion in Action provides support including food, clothing, education, medical support for all in the home and financial support to the women to start a trade.⁴²⁶ In future, the Foundation plans to build a modern children's shelter with facilities to care for the holistic need of underprivileged children.⁴²⁷

⁴²² See Okyerefo, "The Gospel of Public Image in Ghana," 211.

⁴²³ This author was part of the Medical NGO (FREME Ghana) that was contracted by these PMs to under medical screening/diagnostic services for the communities

⁴²⁴ See Andrews Adjei Druye, "Self-Management Strategies for Sickle Cell Disease in Ghana: A Mixed Method Study" (Unpublished PhD. Thesis, Victoria University of Wellington, 2016), 14.

⁴²⁵ Interview with Taylor.

⁴²⁶ Interview with Taylor.

⁴²⁷ Central Aid has also constructed a 50-bed, fully-furnished boys' hostel for the Osu Children's Home in Accra. See Central Aid, "Our Achievement."

Thus while there is no doubt that the social spending of PMs may be aimed at or will lead to increased church participation and by extension church growth,⁴²⁸ the economic value that it creates in relieving government to focus on preventive aspects of social protection and other state interventions cannot be underestimated.

4.4.0 Economic Advocacy

Economic advocates usually focus on the promotion and monitoring of economic conditions, policies and initiatives to ensure that despite the competing interests of state actors and corporate organisations, policy makers consult widely to ensure that their decisions benefit the people they represent. PMs are engaged in advocacy relating to three of the priority areas identified by GSGDA. This includes advocacy in agriculture (theme 3), the management of the oil and gas sectors (theme 4) as well as transparent and accountable governance (theme 7).

One notable issue in Pentecostal intervention in this area is that its advocacy is usually focused on areas where they have little or no direct investments or interests. Yet another notable issue is that the CPMs usually advocate collectively through the umbrella body–GPCC. The GPCC normally prefers to use the mainstream of economic advocacy in Ghana, which is the issuing of a communique and press statements to relay the stance of the Council on the economic policies of governments. In the case of CMs, individual ministries usually act alone. Such advocacy usually comes in the form of sermons, public speeches and writings of leaders. This contrast exists because unlike the CMs, the CPMs have through GPCC developed structures that enable such interventions over the years.⁴²⁹ Even so, in recent years the Concerned Clergy Association of Ghana and most recently the Charismatic Bishops Conference as newer Charismatic umbrella groups are beginning to adopt similar collective stands on issues. However, they are yet to develop similar structures in terms of a secretariat that will properly coordinate its activities.⁴³⁰

⁴²⁸ See Anthony Gill and Erik Lundsgaarde, “State Welfare Spending and Religiosity: A Cross-National Analysis,” paper presented at the American Political Science Association National Meeting, Philadelphia, 2003. Gill and Erik have developed a model using data from the World Values Survey, IMF and World Bank which links state welfare spending and religious participation. The understanding is that increased social spending by churches in an era of reduced government spending in social spending will lead to increased church participation.

⁴²⁹ Asigri, GPCC Programmes.

⁴³⁰ In more recent times, however, some organised CMs have also started issuing communiques. See Marian Ansah, “Increase Road Tolls To \$1–Charismatic Bishops Conference,” March 14, 2017, <http://www.christianworldgh.com/2017/03/14/increase-road-tolls-to-1-charismatic-bishops-conference/>; “Abolish JHS/SHS System and Bring Back ‘O’ and ‘A’ Levels–Charismatic Bishops Conference,” 14 March, 2017, <http://www.christianworldgh.com/2017/03/14/abolish-jhsshs-system-and-bring-back-o-and-a-levels-charismatic-bishops-conference/>.

In most of its activities, the GPCC either independently or in collaboration with other religious and non-religious groups champions economic policies that will promote the economic well-being of the citizenry while criticising and/or offering alternative solutions to those policies whose implementation may lead to hardship for the Ghanaian people. For example, the GPCC, in January 2014, issued a communiqué titled “Issues of National Concern,” which weighed into a debate on the Plant Breeders Bill that sought to introduce genetically modified food and seeds in Ghana.

As per GSGDA (theme 3) the agriculture sector is expected to play a critical role in the transformation of the country’s economy in the medium-term⁴³¹ as it was envisioned to be linked with industry that will lead to the creation of jobs, increased export and earnings and food security.⁴³² To meet this target government is expected to accelerate agricultural modernisation and natural resource management with some specific interventions including the promotion of seed and planting material development and improvement of science, technology and innovation application in the Agricultural sector—Hence the Plant Breeders Bill.

Laudable as the initiative is, the GPCC seemed concerned about the lack of information and consultation on the bill. After consulting researchers and other experts,⁴³³ the GPCC asked five critical questions which it believed needed to be addressed before any decision could be made on the bill. For instance, the GPCC sought to find out whether the genetic engineering of seeds was necessary to improve farming productivity in Ghana.⁴³⁴ They also questioned the credibility and reliability of the scientific information on genetically modified food and why Ghanaian research scientists had been silent on the debate.⁴³⁵ Despite the ‘neutral tone’ of the communiqué, GPCC’s subsequent association with the statement issued by the Faith-Based Organisation, (a platform of religious groups of which the GPCC is a member) on June 2014 which opposed the Plant Breeders Bill was a confirmation of the Council’s position on the proposed legislation.⁴³⁶

The GPCC’s alternative suggestion while government pursues more research on the proposal also highlighted very important issues in the agricultural sector which need government attention. The GPCC, for instance, suggested:

⁴³¹ Government of Ghana, Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda, 18.

⁴³² Government of Ghana, Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda, 9-12.

⁴³³ Interview with Onyinah.

⁴³⁴ Samuel Antwi, “Communique: Issues of National Concern” (Ghana Pentecostal Council and Charismatic Council, January 24, 2014), 1.

⁴³⁵ Antwi, “Communique: Issues of National Concern,” 2.

⁴³⁶ See Masahudu Ankiilu Kunateh, “Halt the Passage of the Plant Breeders Bill into Law-Faith Based Organisations Call on Prez Mahama,” *The Chronicle*, June 22, 2014.

It will be appropriate for the government to put on hold the decision to endorse GM (genetically modified) food, whilst the international debate is still ongoing. Meanwhile, (the) government can put in place a pragmatic approach to improving the current method of farming, including irrigation, storage facilities and also marketing of food produce.⁴³⁷

In the same June 2014 communiqué, the GPCC expressed concerns about the activities of both legal and illegal miners—*galamsey* operators—who were destroying water bodies, farmlands and the environment more generally. The Council urged political office holders to regulate the rate at which farmlands were being taken over for mining.⁴³⁸ This concern aligns with government’s responsibility under the GSGDA to “enforce compliance with relevant regulations and guidelines on small-scale mining and improving technical capacity of small-scale miners to enhance efficiency and sustainability in their operations.”⁴³⁹ Additionally, government is expected to “monitor the activities of both large and small scale mining companies in order to protect the environment;”⁴⁴⁰ while “strengthen[ing] and enforcing existing environmental laws and regulations including the passage of regulations under the current Minerals and Mining Act 2006 (Act 703)”⁴⁴¹

As indicated in chapter four, the GPCC is also part of the Civic Forum Initiative that in the past engaged government on national policies aimed at meeting the Millennium Development Goal (MDGs).⁴⁴² The Council and other partners supported the United Nations’ view that one of the key ways of achieving food security and nutrition is gender equality and economic and social improvement for rural women.⁴⁴³ In this light, the Forum was focused on advocating that women and mothers be empowered financially by the government and other institutions to help them have gainful employment. This will empower them economically to provide sustenance for their families instead of the provision of free food which cannot be sustained in the long run.⁴⁴⁴

In working with other religious umbrella groups and non-religious groups, the GPCC has collaborated with the CCG and the Ghana Civil Society Coalition. For example, in 2010,

⁴³⁷ Kunateh, “Halt the Passage of the Plant Breeders Bill into Law-Faith Based Organisations Call on Prez Mahama.

⁴³⁸ Antwi, “Issues of National Concern,” 2. See also The Christian Council of Ghana and the Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Council, “Communique Issued at Evangel Assemblies of God Church, Adabraka, Accra on June 6, 2017”. <http://www.christiancouncilgh.org/NewsPages/CCG-GPCC-Communique-June-2017.php>

⁴³⁹ Government of Ghana, Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda, 20.

⁴⁴⁰ International Monetary Fund, Ghana: Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, 9.

⁴⁴¹ International Monetary Fund.

⁴⁴² Interview with Ernest Asigri. The United Nations is currently working with a new economic policy document called the Sustainable Development Goals whose implantation began in 2016 and will end in 2030.

⁴⁴³ United Nations, “Millennium Development Goals: Goals, Targets and Indicators” (United Nations, January 1, 2007), <http://www.unmillenniumproject.org/goals/gti.htm>.

⁴⁴⁴ Interview with Ernest Asigri.

the GPCC collaborated with these two groups on Ghana's Oil and Gas sector. As a policy strategy, oil and gas resources are to be developed to become a major anchor for national growth and development. It is envisaged that "oil and gas will provide the opportunity for the diversification of the economy, as well as build capacity to support the needs of a modern industrial society."⁴⁴⁵

While commending government's effort in the sector, the GPCC and its collaborators had some concerns. It, for instance, commended government's efforts and commitment to consulting widely with all stakeholders in the gas and oil sector and its consideration of recommendations by civil society platforms on oil and gas on the management of petroleum revenue.⁴⁴⁶ It also took note of the President's public pronouncement to ensure transparency and accountability through the extension of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative to oil and gas.⁴⁴⁷ However, the three groups raised critical issues that government had to address to ensure that the entire nation benefits from the proceeds of the oil and gas. They, for instance, complained about the lack of transparency and accountability in the petroleum exploration and production, particularly the auctioning of oil blocks without competitive tendering or bidding process and also the glaring indications that some processes in the development of the industry are being fast-tracked especially in the consideration of the relevant bills being submitted to parliament which have the tendency to compromise the quality of public consultations.⁴⁴⁸ This intervention is a check on government to ensure that there is enough transparency in the industries to reduce the incidence of corruption, conflict of interest and other such issues that will affect the realisation of this national policy.

Having moved into establishment, the GPCC now seems to be more organised and thus conducts its public engagement with government on economic decisions in a direct way, just as the HMCs have been doing over the years. This signals that as churches become more organised, there is a shift of political talk from the pulpit to more engagement.

Most leaders of CMs usually act alone by using their sermons and other public speeches as platforms for their economic advocacy. Bishop James (Senior Bishop at ACI) confirms this assertion when noted:

In Ghana, Dr Otabil, the Archbishop Nicholas Duncan-Williams, and Bishop Agyin Asare, seem to be captured in their messages. Unlike a certain Papal message; (where) the Pope speaks to the

⁴⁴⁵ International Monetary Fund, Ghana: Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, 12, 62-63

⁴⁴⁶ Fred Deegbe and Samuel Antwi, "Joint Communiqué Issued by the Christian Council of Ghana and the Ghana Pentecostal Council with Civil Society Organisations" (Christian Council of Ghana and the Ghana Pentecostal Council Coalition on Oil and Gas Find, July 26, 2010), 1.

⁴⁴⁷ Deegbe and Antwi, "Joint Communiqué," 1.

⁴⁴⁸ Deegbe and Antwi, "Joint Communiqué," 1-2.

Catholics through the Papal letter but not the homily where he is deemed to make proper presentations of the word to the flock, Charismatics can talk about anything in their message and they do that consistently.⁴⁴⁹

For example, speaking at the launch of a book titled “Dare to Dream,” Otabil admonished Ghanaians to rise up and demand what is best by resisting the temptation of being content with the supply of what he calls ‘minimal’ by settling for fewer goods and services from the state. He complained thus:

We move from one stage of deterioration to the other and we are supposed to appreciate it and love it. We can’t love it, we can’t just be happy because a road has been tarred. We can’t just be happy because we didn’t have electricity now we have electricity. We can’t be happy with minimal(s), we want maximal(s), we want the best and not the least. The citizens must have an appetite for better because what happens is that, when you get pushed down, you get settled for being pushed down.⁴⁵⁰

At another speech delivered at the 30th Anniversary of the ICGC in 2014, for example, Otabil used the example of how the ICGC started at a difficult period of economic depression and political uncertainty in 1984, but still went on to become a successful church because the leadership of the church stretched its hands to God and not to man.⁴⁵¹ He told a story of how he visited the African Union Headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, which has a gold decorated statue of Dr Kwame Nkrumah sitting in front of the building. The inscription beneath the statue is a biblical verse from Psalm 68:31: “Ethiopia shall stretch forth her hand to God.” This was the same quote Nkrumah used to conclude his famous ‘Africa must rise’ speech and the main theme of Otabil’s well-known book, *Beyond the Rivers of Ethiopia*. Otabil notes that when he read the quote he was saddened. He felt no pride in looking at the building because it was not built with the resources of Africans but was rather a gift from the Chinese Government.⁴⁵² Accordingly, the inscribed verse was inconsistent with how the building was acquired. This development, he noted, typified Africa’s continued dependence on foreign assistance. He has, therefore, seized every public opportunity to admonish African leaders and its people to have a deeper resolve to change the African story and paint a new picture of Africa.⁴⁵³

⁴⁴⁹ Interview with Saah.

⁴⁵⁰ Edwin Appiah, “Ghanaians Should Refuse to Be Content with Roads, Electricity: Otabil Rallies,” Myjoyonline.com, February 17, 2016, <http://www.myjoyonline.com/news/2016/February-17th/ghanaians-should-refuse-to-be-content-with-roads-electricity-otabil-rallies.php>.

⁴⁵¹ Mensa Otabil, “Speech Delivered at 30th Anniversary of the International Central Gospel Church” (Accra, March 3, 2014).

⁴⁵² Otabil, “Speech Delivered at 30th Anniversary.”

⁴⁵³ Otabil, “Speech Delivered at 30th Anniversary.” See also Mensa Otabil, *Four Laws of Productivity: God’s Foundation for Living* (Lanham: Pneuma Life Publishing, 1991), 131–139.

One critical point to note here is that, Otabil does not limit his admonitions and criticisms to political actors—which is usually the characteristic of the GPCC and HMCs. As will be explored further in chapter 6, he focuses more on the citizenry.⁴⁵⁴ It is Otabil’s resolve to see individuals take their own destiny into their hands. This, according to the ICGC, informs the mission of the Church of ‘raising leaders, shaping visions and influencing society through Christ.’ Otabil believes that he has been called to raise individual leaders who will champion the rise of Africa. Hence, he sees every individual as a leader who must have a vision and must be a person of great influence to make an impact on the society. He has noted, that:

If a person comes to our church crawling he or she will be inspired to start walking; if he comes walking he will be inspired to start running; if he comes running he will be inspired to start flying; whatever stage you come in into this church you will leave here improved in a better version of yourself. We are passionate about personal transformation. We are passionate about social transformation.⁴⁵⁵

However, it must be noted that the mission to raise leaders to occupy political and corporate positions is not only unique to the ICGC, but rather an aspect of the spiritual capital of other PMs in Ghana and Africa. This approach seeks to build the capacity of the individual not only to achieve economic independence but be at the forefront of the political decision-making process.

Rev. Dr Yaw Frimpong-Manso (Superintendent of the AoG-G), who was recently appointed to head the Commission on Small Arms noted in an interview, “when it comes to national issues I am a Ghanaian and I will serve in any position government gives me.”⁴⁵⁶ Joseph Quayesi-Amakye has also noted this shift and observed that the leadership of CPCs is now challenging Ghanaian Christians to “make national welfare their Christian duty.”⁴⁵⁷ It is worth exploring this new interest which represents a shift of CPCs like the CoP and AoG-G that did not previously encourage direct partisan politics by its members in the past. While the likes of Otabil seek to train individuals to take over the affairs of the state, the CPCs (aside from the issuing of communiques) have begun encouraging their members to take an active part in politics, not necessarily to take over the affairs of the state as envisioned by Otabil but to ‘cleanse and purge it’ – a position that is uncharacteristic of this strand of Pentecostalism.

Describing CoP’s new teaching as a “revolutionary” social gospel, Quayesi-Amakye in reference to Onyinah observes that the key task for Christians as they enter politics is to make

⁴⁵⁴ See Bryant L. Myers, “Progressive Pentecostalism, Development, and Christian Development NGOs: A Challenge and an Opportunity,” *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 39, no. 3 (2015): 117.

⁴⁵⁵ Otabil, “Speech Delivered at 30th Anniversary.”

⁴⁵⁶ Gifty Andoah Appiah, Interview with Yaw Frimpong Manso on Church and Politics, *The Pulse on Joy News*, 21 September 2017.

⁴⁵⁷ Quayesi-Amakye, “Pentecostals and Church-State Relations,” 644.

biblical task contemporaneous, which can be achieved through a transformative reading of the Bible to include both personal and societal prosperity.⁴⁵⁸ But Koduah (a Former General Secretary of the CoP) who wants a more direct church involvement recommends that churches identify mature 'spirit-filled' Christians and encourage them to go into politics because even though Christians are in the majority in each state institution, corruption and abuse of office is widespread. He is therefore advocating a more direct collaboration between the Christian churches and the state in political appointments to ensure that a 'true Christians' are prioritise.

Yet in more recent times one exceptional umbrella group of CMs that has been very critical of political decisions is the CCAG. For instance, the CCAG was very critical of government's decision to increase fuel prices when deliberations on fuel price adjustments were ongoing and the state had not been transparent with how it has spent the windfall (profit) that accumulated when oil prices on the international market fell (low price).

One of Government's commitment in the GSGDA is the promotion of transparent, accountable and responsive governance (theme 7). The broad goal of this policy is to empower both state and non-state actors to fully appreciate and participate in the governance process. A key priority in the medium term among many others is citizens' access to rights and entitlements which the CCAG's press statements sought to demand from government.⁴⁵⁹

The government has explained that despite the low pricing of crude oil, it will not reduce or implement the automatic adjustment formula (which kicks in to either reduce or increase prices whenever there is a price change of crude oil) because it was using monies accrued from the windfall to pay off legacy debts⁴⁶⁰ Despite this explanation, there has not been full disclosure on how much monies have been collected and spent hence the CCAG's strongly worded statement on the back of a fuel price increase:

The government's announcement of fuel price increase was much of a surprise, since the government itself has initiated a debate to seek the way forward for fuel pricing. It is our observation that this trick has been applied by all the successive governments in the fourth republic. They pretend as if the views of the people matter then in the midst of the debate they pull their trick. If you had already made up your mind why did you waste everybody's time by engaging us in a debate? The CCAG will want the government to come out to prove/explain to the people of Ghana how this petroleum price increase will benefit the people of this nation especially the poor and the vulnerable. This is unacceptable, it is time we develop proper strategies to doing things to avoid inflicting such pain on people we pledge to protect, defend and serve.⁴⁶¹

⁴⁵⁸ Quayesi-Amakye, "Pentecostals and Church-State Relations," 644.

⁴⁵⁹ International Monetary Fund, Ghana: Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, 44, 49.

⁴⁶⁰ The legacy debt accrued following government inability to pay off its accumulated subsidies for consumers and that of government agencies.

⁴⁶¹ Concerned Clergy Association of Ghana, "Petroleum Price Increment Very Unfortunate," 18 February 2013.

Thus the interest of PMs in accountable governance is not only in line with the national objectives as spelled out in the GSGDA but more importantly for our purpose a new interest, especially by the Charismatic strand to now, confront government on its decisions, a departure from what the older PMs—who prefer dialogue to collision with political actors on matters of the state.

4.5.0 Implications for Previous Scholarly Views

From the above empirical research of comparing the agenda set out in the GSGDA and Pentecostal interventions, it is clear that the somewhat ‘unintended’ interventions of the PMs are having an impact on the Ghanaian economy. This study takes cognisance of the fact that there are not enough quantitative surveys to draw any definite conclusions on the extent of the impact of these interventions. However, as demonstrated above, it is clear that qualitatively, whether such interventions are intended or not, they align in many respects with the economic policy of Ghana which successive governments under the Fourth Republic have adopted and implemented.

This evidence leads this study to suggest a re-assessment of scholarly works, particularly that of Paul Gifford that has concluded that Pentecostal interventions do not impact and/or transform the African economies in any way.⁴⁶² Gifford is one scholar who has challenged the view of scholars like David Martin, Stephen Ellis and Gerrie ter Haar, Meyer and Ruth Marshall that Pentecostal Ministries’ activities will help and are “helping bring Africa into the modern globalising world.”⁴⁶³ His challenge is based on the fact that these scholars failed to provide enough evidence to back their claim that political systems are reformed in any meaningful sense by PMs’ teachings and ideas.⁴⁶⁴ He has, therefore, passed a verdict on the observations of these scholars, noting:

All these are serious observers with profound insight into Africa’s charismatic explosion, but they seem on this point to have shown only first, that Africans use this demonic cosmology to make sense of the evils that befall them and, second that African Christians claim to be transforming their societies around them. These authors have not shown that Africa has thereby been transformed in any way.⁴⁶⁵

He, for instance, challenges Ellis and ter Haar’s claim that some restructuring of government system is actually taking place and that the churches are helping to re-order the ways power is

⁴⁶² Gifford, *Ghana’s New Christianity*.

⁴⁶³ Gifford, “Trajectories in African Christianity,” 279. See also Gifford, *Ghana’s New Christianity*, 169–172.

⁴⁶⁴ Gifford, *Ghana’s New Christianity*, 190.

⁴⁶⁵ Gifford, *Ghana’s New Christianity*, 190.172.

acquired and distributed in these societies.⁴⁶⁶ He insists that Ellis and ter Haar have not proved this nor “shown what might count as evidence for this claim and how we might assess it.”

4.5.1 Charismatic Prosperity Teaching

One important challenge to Gifford’s assessment is his essentialist characterisation of CMs’ prosperity teaching as representative of all Pentecostal groups and lack of attention or value he places on Pentecostal practice as against their teaching and ideas. By focusing on CMs prosperity teachings, he fails to consider other major Pentecostal groups like the CPMs as well as Pentecostal practical interventions.

While the issue of the influence of CMs’ on other strands of PMs is undeniable, it is also equally true that the former is also influenced by the other strands of Pentecostalism. Essentially, there is an incessant borrowing among the PMs and indeed among the Christian churches in Ghana. Again, although Gifford claims that the CMs influence other PMs, he has not provided evidence or proof that such influence necessarily becomes the main teachings/emphasis of these churches (CPMs, NPMs, etc.)—based upon which he concludes that these churches are essentially the same. Hence this is an assumption. While some strands of PMs have incorporated prosperity, teachings emphasised by CMs into their liturgy, these teachings are not necessarily the pre-occupation of these strands of Pentecostalism.

It must also be noted that there is a marked difference among CMs when it comes to their teaching of the prosperity gospel—a claim Gifford has severally maintained.⁴⁶⁷ In Ghana, the ICGC and ACI are the two largest CMs and largely influence other churches within their strand.⁴⁶⁸ The ICGC, as Gifford has rightly noted, preaches a different form of prosperity teaching which promotes a good work ethic and puts less emphasis on enchantment.⁴⁶⁹ When this view is considered, it is more likely that a significant number of PMs will be focusing less on the prosperity teachings Gifford has raised issues with—the two

⁴⁶⁶ Gifford, *Ghana’s New Christianity*, 190.171, referring to Ellis and ter Haar, “Religion and Politics in Africa,” 195.

⁴⁶⁷ See Gifford, “Prosperity,” 382; Gifford, *Ghana’s New Christianity*, 123; Gifford, *Modernity in Africa*, 59. Paul Gifford, “Unity and Diversity within African Pentecostal Ministries: Comparison of the Christianities of Daniel Olukoya and David Oyedepo,” in *Pentecostalism in Africa: Presence and Impact of Pneumatic Christianity in Postcolonial Societies*, ed. Martin Lindhardt (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 115–35.

⁴⁶⁸ Gifford has for instance noted that the ICGCC leader (Otabil) is one of the three or four that personify the entire charismatic phenomenon in Ghana. See Gifford, *Ghana’s New Christianity*, 118. See also Hasu, Päivi, “Prosperity Gospels and Enchanted Worldviews: Two Responses to Socio-economic Transformation in Tanzanian Pentecostals Christianity,” in *Pentecostalism and Development: Churches, NGOs and Social Change in Africa*, ed. Dena Freeman (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2012), 67–76, Okyerefo, “The Gospel of Public Image in Ghana,” 212 and De Witte, “African Liberation in a Neoliberal World,” 4.

⁴⁶⁹ Gifford, *Ghana’s New Christianity*, 121

strands of CPMs and CMs, put together. This consideration is based on the fact that the CPMs emphasise less on these teachings and another half within the CMs also do not necessarily focus on the popular version of prosperity gospel that Gifford questions.

Hence, Gifford's generalisation of the CMs' prosperity teachings as essentially being representative of the entire PMs may not be a cogent assessment. In essence, a fair assessment of these churches cannot be made if one limits himself to a particular teaching that characterises one strand of Pentecostalism (especially CMs) and takes that as representative of other strands.⁴⁷⁰

4.5.2 Enchanted Worldview

The influence of an enchanted worldview in Pentecostal interventions is but one of the factors that influences political action. That is to say, while Pentecostals have not abandoned their belief in the divine provision, they do not necessarily explain/interpret every socio-economic issue in spiritual terms. In fact, a multiplicity of rationales informs their interventions. Take, for instance, the immediate rationale for the Pentecostal interventions in the area of education. This intervention is purely based on the economic consideration of meeting the high demand for university education which the public universities are unable to meet. The Compassion Drug Rehab Centre of the ACI was set up because of the experience of Archbishop Duncan Williams, who once abused drugs before his conversion. Bishop James Nana Ofori-Attah (Former Supervisory Bishop for Compassion in Action) confirms this when he noted:

The Archbishop was once a victim of a sort (drug abuse) and I believe strongly that is what propels him to support (the rehab centre). The problem of people like the homeless, drug addicts, prostitutes, drunkards and when you look at it well, people are not interested in taking care of such people and so because he also has a background (experience) in that; he was a school dropout and then, he started smoking and leading a life that some of these people are leading. So, I think that is where the whole thing comes from.⁴⁷¹

Thus, the background of the Archbishop makes him identify with the predicament of the needy and also people battling with various kinds of addiction. His actual resolve to ensure that others with similar experiences receive help informed the setting up of the Rehab Centre.⁴⁷²

Similarly, the Central Educational Scholarship was started based on the life experience of Otabil. In one of his daily messages broadcast after the midday news on Joy FM (July 2016),

⁴⁷⁰ Karen Lauterbach, "Review of Paul Gifford's Christianity, Development and Modernity in Africa," *Africa* 86, no. 3 (2016): 605.

⁴⁷¹ Interview with James Nana Ofori-Attah.

⁴⁷² Interview with Taylor

Otabil indicated that the reason for setting up the Central Educational Grants and Scholarship Scheme was because of the difficulty he went through to fund his education while growing up – his mother and father having died while he was still young. Hence, in this very instance too, the main rationale that led to the setting up of the scholarship scheme is not based on a worldview or any religious consideration.

Consider also the CoP's investments in Ghana, which are also markedly different from those of other PMs. The rationale is captured within the framework of "God's Covenant with the church, which serves as the philosophy and also a spiritual capital underpinning the approaches and operations of the church."⁴⁷³ The 'Covenant' essentially instructs the church to focus on evangelism. Thus, James McKeown, who first led the implementation of the church's covenant, initially prioritised evangelism over social concerns. This is summed up as "Just evangelise; win the people to Christ. The people will establish the schools and build the hospitals."⁴⁷⁴ While not dismissing the importance of addressing the social and economic needs of its members, McKeown was of the view that evangelism and the saving of souls should precede the social needs of the people. Subsequently, those who would be saved through evangelism would be filled with the Holy Spirit and would be given the capacity to create social projects and programmes that would address the physical needs of members.⁴⁷⁵ Hence the current huge investments of the CoP are seen as the fulfilment of God's covenant with the Church having obeyed God's instructions.⁴⁷⁶

The rationale for the interventions analysed above clearly reveals that various reasons frame these interventions. The multiplicity of reasons range from business and economic reasons, the life or past experience of the leaders, covenant relation with God, evangelism, ploy to attract members, among others. If these different rationales are the lead/main considerations framing the interventions, then the belief in an enchanted worldview cannot necessarily have a substantial negative impact on African economies as Gifford asserts. Accordingly, while undoubtedly the enchanted worldview is central to Pentecostal belief, the suggestion that it undermines economic development owing to emphasis in Pentecostal belief must be re-considered. This is because, as demonstrated above, it is not necessarily the main driver in Pentecostal interventions and thus to place premium on its effects amounts to giving little credence to the various rationales and drivers that are the genesis of Pentecostal interventions.

⁴⁷³ Kumi-Larbi, "Church of Pentecost."

⁴⁷⁴ Kumi-Larbi, "Church of Pentecost."

⁴⁷⁵ Indeed, McKeown is quoted as saying that the HMCs are over focusing their energies on establishing schools and hospitals while the people were perishing. See Debrunner, *Christianity in Ghana*, 75.

⁴⁷⁶ See Opoku Onyinah, "Chairman Report at the 16th Extraordinary Minister's Conference," 2017.

This essentially means that Gifford's concern about the negative influence of an enchanted worldview in any developmental debates cannot be sustained because such views do not always colour their thinking.

In our view, a more purposeful approach is to avoid essentialism by enlarging the scope of ministries that are considered as this will give us a fair idea of each PMs as demonstrated above. From such specific analysis, one will be able to draw a comparison as to the similarities and points of departures among the strands, instead of taking one church's teaching as characteristic of all groups. Again, because not all Pentecostal practices are informed by an enchanted worldview, we suggest that future scholars look beyond beliefs

4.6.0 Conclusion

This chapter has established that the present Pentecostal engagement with the Ghanaian economy is a marked departure from the past where it stayed away from socio-economic issues and solely concerned themselves with other-worldly issues, especially evangelism and church planting. While they have not completely abounded their spiritual interpretations of aspects of the Ghanaian economy, they are no doubt engaged in intended and unintended activities that are having positive impact on the economy. Again the study has demonstrated that while they have replicated the economic interventions of the HMCs they have also intervened in other economic activities that are distinctive and novel.

Through a comparison of Ghana's economic agenda with Pentecostal interventions the chapter has demonstrated that the latter's interventions conform to the former's development goals. Based on this finding, the study has suggested contrary to the earlier limited scope adopted by Paul Gifford for the widening of the scope of issues considered or use in assessing the impact of PMs interventions in the Ghanaian economy. We have argued that focusing on prosperity teachings and the enchanted worldview of CMs in analysing their interventions is limited. While the study agrees that aspects of Charismatic teachings may not promote economic activities, the study has also shown that Pentecostal practical interventions and in fact other teachings promote good work ethics⁴⁷⁷ and in essence leads to productivity and economic growth. In the nutshell, while PMs' rationales for intervening in the economy may not necessarily be intended to complement government's efforts these interventions alignment with the developmental goals of Ghana suggests that they are contributing in no small way in

⁴⁷⁷ See the books like Mensa Otabil, *Goal Setting and Goal Getting* (Accra: Alpha Print House, 2007); Mensa Otabil, *Anointed to Start and Finish* (Accra: Combert Publications, 2006); Nicolas Duncan Williams, *Destined to Make an Impact* (Accra: Prayer Submit Publishing, 2006).

transforming aspects of the Ghanaian economy which secular analysts and specifically the United Nations expects developing nations to focus on.

CHAPTER 5: PENTECOSTALS AND DIVINE PROPHECY

***Prayer:** Anything that will put the name of Ghana on the international news for evil and not for good, God should let it be frustrated. Let that agenda be annulled, let it be terminated ... let secure the gate of this country, cities, homes... let the peace of this country be secured, let our borders be secured, let our airspace be secured, against tragedies, against strange happenings ... evil incidents, demonic activities, shedding of blood, violence, unrest, ...anything that will bring the country to a standstill for even a minute or an hour let it be uprootedAny event in the 'womb of time' that will turn back the clock of this country... whatever that event is ...the bible says in Hosea 10:13 give them a miscarrying womb and a dry breast...whatever the enemy is hatching and whatever they are conceiving, any demonic pregnancy in the 'wombs of time' concerning the destiny of this nation let it be miscarriage. (Archbishop Nicolas Duncan-Williams, 2016).*

***Prophecy:** In the realms of the spirit, the Lord has chosen our President (then incumbent John Mahama of the NDC) ...in the realms of the spirit where our President is standing, he is very far... and where he is in the spirit, I can tell you that there is no close gap, with his position in the spirit ... I can say boldly on this set that the Lord that minister to me (says) he is going to outdoor our President of this nation publicly and in the ears of everybody. God is about to affirm. (Prophet Akwasi Agyemang Prempeh, 2016)*

5.0.0 Introduction

There have been significant transitions in Pentecostals' spiritual modes of engagement with political issues in Ghana. These changes are in large part linked to the variations in Pentecostal responses to the existential needs of adherents. In relation to prophetic intervention in Ghanaian politics, the emergence of political prophecies that predict the future represents a significant shift from the pre-Fourth Republican era. Whereas in that earlier period PMs were rarely engaged by political actors, in more recent times they have begun to more actively consult Pentecostal prophets seeking their 'divine predictions.'

Writing in 2004, Paul Gifford reported that there had been a shift in emphasis from deliverance offered by the CMs to the prophetic word of the Neo-Prophetic pastors.⁴⁷⁸ Yet 'prophetic Christianity' was seldom given prominence by observers of Pentecostalism, though there is "a whole swathe of Ghana's new Christianity where this element is constitutive."⁴⁷⁹ More than a decade since Gifford's assertion, the NPMs which emphasise prophecy are also occupying the public space and challenging the authority of older PMs and HMCs in speaking and responding to both individual and political issues.

The pervasiveness of 'divine predictions'—which are focused on forecasting political events and happenings' such as the one by Prophet Akwasi Agyemang Prempeh reproduced

⁴⁷⁸ Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity*, 108-109.

⁴⁷⁹ Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity*, 109.

above demonstrates that while PMs have transitioned to embrace direct modes of engagements, they have nonetheless not completely stopped (continuity) the spiritualisation of political issues. What has changed is a departure from one form of spiritualising politics (deliverance) such as that of Duncan-Williams reproduced above to another (prophetic declaration). Through ‘divine predictions’ NPMs pastors claim they have a new anointing that enables them to instantly diagnose the problems of individuals and institutions and resolve them by re-negotiating with God to change his divine purpose for such individuals and entities. They also claim they can make a declaration to overturn any malevolent activities of spirit forces that may or have changed an individual or a country’s progress in life.

This chapter is divided into four main sections. The first section sketches the background of Prophetism in Ghana and establishes how the pervasiveness of ‘divine predictions’ is linked to the re-emergence of Prophetism within Ghanaian Pentecostal Christianity. The second section analyses ‘divine predictions,’ particularly the outcome of presidential elections and the predictive deaths of high profile politicians. The third section is the implication of ‘divine predictions’ and the last section offers a conclusion. The chapter will demonstrate that PMs have through ‘divine predictions’ developed a distinctive form of engagement with politics that has become the new face of Pentecostal political engagement in Ghana.

5.1.0 The Development of Political Prophecies in Ghana

While ‘Neo-Prophetism’ as a separate and unique ministry that emphasises prophecy within Pentecostalism is of recent phenomenon, prophecy has long been associated with the Christian mission in Ghana. Within Ghanaian Pentecostalism, prophecy is traced to the ministries of the forerunners of Pentecostalism in Ghana. Joseph Quayesi-Amakye has provided a useful typology that categorises the various phases of Prophetism in Ghana into five historical periods beginning in the 1910s with the African Indigenous Churches (AICs). This is followed by prophets who broke away from CPMs in the 1950s. The third and fourth phases were the prophetic ministries within the Christian fellowships in schools in the 1970s and the denominational prayer camps of CPMs in the 1980s, respectively. The fifth and current phase is the independent prophetic churches or Neo-Prophetic Ministries (NPMs) of the 1980s and 1990s.⁴⁸⁰

⁴⁸⁰ Joseph Quayesi-Amakye, “Ghana’s New Prophetism: Antecedents and Some Characteristic Features,” *Australasian Pentecostal Studies*, no. 15, accessed November 20, 2015.

Until the emergence of NPMs as an independent ministry in the 1980s and 90s, Prophetism operated on the fringes of the ministries of HMCs⁴⁸¹ and other older Pentecostal Ministries, in particular, the CPMs and CMs—whose criticism of the prominence accorded the phenomenon of prophecy and accusation of the ministry’s engagement in syncretic practices led to a decline in the prophetic ministries in the 1940s and 50s.⁴⁸²

NPMs employ both the belief systems and elements of Spiritual Churches and CMs⁴⁸³ They mainly emphasise prophecy and healing using elements like water, anointing oil, salt, etc. They mostly employ the Old Testament which is referred to in justifying and qualifying their prophecies and the basis of prescribed solutions. Their teachings are delivered in the local Ghanaian language (Twi). Their teachings and rituals also link well with some important elements of indigenous Ghanaian spirituality.⁴⁸⁴ This distinguishes them from CMs, who emphasise New Testament teachings, particularly the gospels and mostly use English in their meetings.

Prophet Isaac Owusu Bempah (Glorious Word Power Ministries International) is considered the forerunner of ‘divine predictions’ of political events. Gifford reports that as of 2001, Bempah, who was referred to as ‘mega prophet,’ was explaining the relevance of prophetic gifting for Ghana.⁴⁸⁵ While the likes of Rev. Immanuel Enoch Agbozo (Evangelical Society of Ghana), Prophet Francis Kwasi Amoako (Resurrection Power and Living Streams Ministries), Prophet Peter Anamoh and Bishop John Yaw Adu, (New Jerusalem Chapel) started pronouncing political prophecies between the 1970s and 1990s, their prophecies were not initially predictive in nature.

For instance, Amoako, (the father of Neo-Prophetism in Ghana), cannot be credited with this phenomenon because his ministry focused on criticising the ills of his day and rarely focused on forecasting political issues such as the cases of ‘divine predictions’ that are considered in this study. It is, for example, reported that at an all Pastors and Evangelists Conference in 1987, Amoako recalled how in 1983, he enquired from God and received an answer that Ghana’s economic decline was due to Christian disunity. He was quoted as saying:

⁴⁸¹ Hans Debrunner, *The Story of Sampson Oppong; History of Christianity in Ghana*; G. M. Haliburton, “The Calling of a Prophet: Sampson Oppong,” *Bulletin of the Society for African Church History* 2, no. 1 (1965): 84-96.

⁴⁸² Quayesi-Amakye, “Ghana’s New Prophetism.”

⁴⁸³ Omenyo Cephas and Atiemo Abamfo Ofori, “Claiming Religious Space: The Case of Neo-Prophetism in Ghana,” *Ghana Bulletin of Theology*, New Series, 1, no. 1 (2006): 55–68. See also Ogbu Kalu, “Pentecostal and Charismatic Reshaping of the African Religious Landscape in the 1990s,” *Mission Studies* 20, no. 1–39 (2003): 85.; Omenyo, “Man of God Prophesy Unto Me,” 40.

⁴⁸⁴ Omenyo and Abamfo, “Claiming Religious Space,” 67.

⁴⁸⁵ Gifford, *Ghana’s New Christianity*, 101.

In 1983, the year which has gone down in Ghana's history as the year of crisis in time of peace, there was smoke all over the country... I sat down and questioned God about what was actually happening. In the process the Lord spoke to me that there was no unity among his children... The Lord again said if Ghana would prosper and become great then the whole solution depends on the unity of the various denominations... The Lord referred me to 2nd Chronicles chapter 7, verse 14... 'If they pray to me and turn away from the evil they have been doing, then I will hear them in heaven, forgive their sins and make their land prosperous again.'⁴⁸⁶

However he announced that there was a chance for the nation to recover from the economic crisis but the full impact of this would be realised if Christian unity was enhanced and sustained.⁴⁸⁷ On many of his evangelistic tours, Amoako mostly criticised the Provisional National Defence Council, which clamped down on dissenting political views and presided over Ghana's economic difficulties in the 1980s⁴⁸⁸ Hence Amoako's attitude towards political issues is not only an exception to that of other PMs who in the pre-Fourth Republican era avoided any collision with the political regimes but also not representative of the new emphasis of Neo-Prophetic pastors who are focused on forecasting political decisions and outcomes.

Similarly, Adu, who claimed that he started issuing predictive prophecies as far back as the 1970s, only came to national attention when one of the Legends of Ghanaian Gospel Music, Yaw Sarpong, claimed he was healed of an unknown illness by the former.⁴⁸⁹ His prophecies, he admits, have not been publicised and emphasised consistently like those of Bempah that have been consistent since the late 1990s.

The shift to the prophetic ministries has enhanced the personality of Neo-Prophetic pastors⁴⁹⁰ who see themselves as operating under a power that is able to give instant answers to the challenges of life and renegotiate any future occurrences in the lives of people. This is in contrast to the deliverance processes and the prosperity gospel of the older Pentecostal churches that have not manifested in the lives of all members.⁴⁹¹ In essence, Neo-Prophet pastors claim to be seers and revealers of hidden things, predictors of the future, anointed to curse and bless effectually and capable of renegotiating the future or the destiny of people.⁴⁹²

⁴⁸⁶ Referenced from Adubofour, "Parachurch Movements," 443. See also APECON, Newsletter of All Pastors and Evangelists Conference, 1(1), 1987, 2.

⁴⁸⁷ Adubofour, "Parachurch Movements," It is worth recalling here that Christian unity or the Unity of the Church as Rev. Enoch Agbozo chose to refer to it is one of the key task of the ministry of Evangelical Society of Ghana as they work towards winning the nation for God. Interview with Immanuel Enoch Agbozo

⁴⁸⁸ Ghana News Agency, "Reverend Francis Akwasi Amoako to Be Remembered,"

<http://www.ghananewsagency.org/print/87445>, March 24, 2015.

⁴⁸⁹ Paul Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity*, 101.

⁴⁹⁰ Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity*, 101.

⁴⁹¹ Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity*, 101.

⁴⁹² See Christian G. Baeta, *Prophetism In Ghana: A Study of Spiritual Churches* (London: SCM Press Ltd, 1962).

The new claim of Neo-prophetic pastors represents a shift from the pre-Fourth Republican period where prophets from spiritual churches were co-opted by mainly military regimes to offer spiritual cleansing of state assets and at other times to support proposals of regimes. In the era of Neo-propheticism, this has changed with most political actors consulting these prophets instead. Prophet Emmanuel Badu Kobi's (Founder of Glorious Waves Church International) admonition to the New Patriotic Party (NPP) Candidate for the 2016 elections (Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo Addo) demonstrates the status of these pastors:

As for me, I see that if Nana Addo will do his things well, then it's for him (win the elections), but I do not think he will take it. I will say this till the end of 2016. I have said on several platforms ... he has to know what to do, but I cannot tell you because he is a public figure. He should look for a prophet who can help him and stop seeing Roman fathers (Catholic Priests) who cannot see anything (spiritual discernment). When you go into the Bible, when Saul was looking for his missing animal he consulted a prophet ... I will not ask any person to come to me, but if he thinks he needs me, he should come and see me.⁴⁹³

5.2.0 Transitions in Pentecostal Spiritual Response to Socio-political Issues

Pentecostalism has not only been successful in adapting to new environments by changing its message and rituals to align and respond to the changes and new challenges faced by its members.⁴⁹⁴ Gifford has argued that this development is not peculiar to Ghana and reports that as of 2004, just like in other jurisdictions where Pentecostalism has thrived, there was a shift towards the prophetic in Ghanaian Pentecostal Christianity.⁴⁹⁵ This follows the failure of the prosperity gospel and deliverance rituals to adequately resolve the existential problems of adherents most importantly poverty and sickness.

Taking Gifford's view as a point of departure, this study contends that the shift to 'divine predictions' of political issues is linked to the larger responses of PMs to the needs of their members.⁴⁹⁶ In other words, there is currently an emphasis on 'divine prediction' because the new attraction in Pentecostalism is focused on prophecies. What follows is an analysis of the changing responses in the Pentecostal spiritual interpretation and responses to socio-political challenges in Ghana until the shift to prophetic declarations in the 1990s.

⁴⁹³ Emmanuel Badu Kobi, Nana Addo Can Never Win The 2016 Elections, Television, January 11, 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q5gDUp-KzWM>.

⁴⁹⁴ Allan Anderson et al., "Introduction to Studying Global Pentecostalism: Theories and Methods," in *Studying Global Pentecostalism: Theories and Methods*, ed. Allan Anderson et al. (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2010), 2.

⁴⁹⁵ Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity*, 83–90. See also Birgit Meyer, "Religious and Secular, 'Spiritual' and 'Physical' in Ghana," in *What Matters? Ethnographies of Value in a (Not So) Secular Age* eds. Courtney Bender and Ann Taves, SSRIC (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), 92.

⁴⁹⁶ For a similar undertaking relating to West Africa, see Andreas Heuser, "Encoding Caesar's Realm—Variants of Spiritual Warfare Politics in Africa," in *Pentecostalism in Africa: Presence and Impact of Pneumatic Christianity in Postcolonial Societies*, ed. Martin Lindhardt (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 285.

5.2.1 Intercessory Prayers for Ghana's Deliverance

The pre-millennial teaching that propelled the growth of CPMs in particular in Ghana declined considerably with the explosion of the prosperity teachings of the Charismatic Ministries (CMs) in the late 1970s and earlier 1980s. Pre-millennialism had taught people to abhor worldly things and instead focus on their salvation, which would guarantee them eternal life. However, by the end of the twentieth century, the new message of PMs had become the prosperity gospel. The prosperity gospel promises health and wealth in this world rather than emphasising the hereafter. During the 1980s, the Pentecostal refrain became that Ghana would witness economic prosperity through the prosperity accrued to the Pentecostal faithful who would go forth to help in the development of the church. However, the promise of wealth and good health was not realised. The 'trickledown effect' did not occur, as the country went through a series of socio-economic difficulties under an undemocratic regime.

Charismatic pastors blamed demonic blockages for the non-realisation of the prosperity of members and by extension, Ghana. This, Charismatic leaders claimed can be dealt with through a deliverance process which involves fasting and travailing prayers. The basic understanding of deliverance is that a Christian's progress and advancement is blocked by demons who maintain some power over individuals and nations, which the individuals or nations may not be aware of.⁴⁹⁷ The Charismatic pastors adopted this approach believing that God's judgment was on the country due to widespread immorality and corruption as well as the activities of territorial and satanic agents.⁴⁹⁸ Thus the deliverance of the nation was two folds: deliverance from the past deeds of the people including their leaders and deliverance from other spirit forces that operate at territorial levels and impact the prosperity of nations.

A lasting practical solution was for the whole nation including its leadership to repent of its sins and for Charismatic pastors to deliver the nation from spiritual forces through the intense prayers. Asamoah-Gyadu, for instance, credits the Charismatic pastors, who particularly drew attention to the spiritual implications of this repentance for the nation. According to him, they saw the problem of the nation as a war or a battle that can only be fought and won by the prayers of what Eastwood Anaba (founder of Fountain Gate Chapel), described

as the 'Rapid Response Team' (a.k.a. God's End Time Militia) of the CMs.⁴⁹⁹

⁴⁹⁷ Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity*, 85.

⁴⁹⁸ Asamoah-Gyadu, "God Bless Our Homeland Ghana," 177.

⁴⁹⁹ Asamoah-Gyadu, "God Bless Our Homeland Ghana," 171.

Duncan-Williams is one of the charismatic leaders who holds strong views on the power of prayer and has extensively preached and written on the power of intercessory prayer to deliver individuals and nations. His understanding of the power of what he describes as the “strategic intercessory prayer” is explored here to explain the Pentecostal understanding of engaging in fasting and travailing prayers to deliver the nation.

Duncan-Williams’ stance on the power of prayer is premised on spiritual causality and will be analysed further in his political theology in chapter 6. He holds that among the many kinds of authorities, spiritual authority is the greatest.⁵⁰⁰ He has opined that if Christians want to restore their dominion on earth which will bring prosperity to the nation then they must pray without ceasing.⁵⁰¹ He describes prayer as “the instrument and weapon that executes the ‘executive decision’ of eternity (God). Therefore, without prayer, the enemy (Satan) and his agents are given authorisation to do as they will but when prayer goes up, heaven comes to ‘town’ (earth).”⁵⁰² In other words, it is only travailing prayer that can overrule territorial spirits.

Duncan-Williams has also argued that every move of God in the world is a result of prayer or was preceded by prayer. He substantiates these claims with reference to biblical examples, including the prayer of Daniel in Babylon (Daniel 8 and 9), Job’s prayer (Job 42:3), that of Jonah in the belly of the fish (Jonah 2) and James’ teaching on the prayer of faith (James 5:13).⁵⁰³ In contemporary times, he cites the particular case of a drug cartel in Colombia who eluded security intelligence for years. He claimed that after 24 hours of prayer by believers in that country, the main brain behind the cartel was apprehended.⁵⁰⁴ He has, therefore, concluded that though the teaching and preaching of the word of God is good and has its own benefits, the word of God alone is incapable of bringing revival unless intercessory prayers are said (Matthew 16:19, Acts 16:25 and 2 Chronicles 7:1).

Duncan-Williams contends that nations and governments can succeed if they engage intercessors who have trained their ears and spirit to understand what heaven legislates and decrees concerning the world, countries, communities and families in present times.⁵⁰⁵ Drawing on 2 Kings 18:1ff, he has explained that intercessory prayer is capable of discerning

⁵⁰⁰ Nicholas Duncan-Williams, *Powers Behind the Scenes: Rediscover Your Power as a Believer to Overcome the Devices of the Enemy* (Middletown: Prayer Submit Publishing, 2016), 6.

⁵⁰¹ Williams, *Prayer Moves God*, 230.

⁵⁰² Anointed Gospel Messages and Teachings, “Ghana National Prayer Summit-Archbishop Duncan,” August 12, 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e3Mkmv4Ou-M>.

⁵⁰³ Paula White Ministries, “Prayer Submit,” November 9, 2012.

⁵⁰⁴ National Prayer Submit, “Election Prayer.”

⁵⁰⁵ The National Intercessors Assembly, “Prayer Gives Authority: Archbishop Duncan-Believers,” February 18, 2011.

what ‘heaven’ is saying and ‘legislating’ presently concerning nations, which is to be a good back up to what is written in the word of God.⁵⁰⁶

As a practical step, Charismatic pastors usually host mass congregational prayer meeting during the year. These prayer meetings include the joint Christian All Believers All-Night, the National Prayer Submit, Prayer Festival, the state sponsored National Thanksgiving Service, Intercessors for Africa meetings, the Full Gospel Business Men’s Fellowship weekly meetings and the monthly Aglow International-Ghana prayer meetings.⁵⁰⁷ The themes for these meetings are usually focused on current happenings in the country and specific prayers are said for Ghana’s prosperity. These prayer meetings are mostly held during election years, when prayer for peaceful elections and smooth political transitions are pronounced.

The state sponsored National Thanksgiving Service is, for instance, organised annually to thank God for consolidating and protecting Ghana’s return to democratic rule.⁵⁰⁸ The Thanksgiving Service is unique not only in terms of the personalities that attend this programme, but also the type of prayers that are introduced when charismatic pastors take lead roles in this national event post 1992. Due to its nationalistic nature, it is also held at the Independence Square⁵⁰⁹ and attended by political party representatives. Also in attendance are the other two arms of government—the Speaker of Parliament and all members of parliament and the Chief Justice and members of the judiciary. After songs of praise and a sermon, special prayers and declarations are made for all arms of government made up of the executive, the judiciary and the legislature. At one of such prayer meetings in 2016 Duncan-Williams declared:

Anything that will put the name of Ghana on the international news for evil and not for good, God should let it be frustrated. Let that agenda be annulled, let it be terminated ... let secure the gate of this country, cities, homes... let the peace of this country be secured, let our borders be secured, let our airspace be secured, against tragedies, against strange happenings ... evil incidents, demonic activities, shedding of blood, violence, unrest, ...anything that will bring the country to a standstill for even a minute or an hour let it be uprootedAny event in the ‘womb of time’ that will turn back the clock of this country... whatever that event is ...the bible says in Hosea 10:13 give them a miscarrying womb and a dry breast...whatever the enemy is hatching and whatever they are conceiving, any demonic pregnancy in the ‘wombs of time’ concerning the destiny of this nation let it be miscarriage.⁵¹⁰

⁵⁰⁶ Anointed Gospel Messages and Teachings, “Prayer Summit.”

⁵⁰⁷ For similar prayer activities by Charismatic Churches in Kenya, see Damaris Seleina Parsitau, “From the Fringes to the Centre: Rethinking the Role of Religion in the Public Sphere in Kenya,” in *Governing the African Public Sphere* (CODESRIA: 12th General Assembly, Yaounde: CODESRIA, 2008), 27–30.

⁵⁰⁸ Muslims say similar prayers in the mosque during their Friday (*Jumah* prayers) preceding the Christian Sunday afternoon Thanksgiving Service.

⁵⁰⁹ Also known as the Black Star Square, the Independence Square contains monuments to Ghana's independence struggle.

⁵¹⁰ Nicholas Duncan-Williams, *Prayer for Ghana* (Accra, 2016), <https://soundcloud.com/john-robert-adovor/archbishop-nicholas-duncan-williams-prayer-grace-festival-2016>.

Yet another significant Pentecostal platform where prayer is mobilised for political purposes is the monthly prayer meetings of the Aglow International-Ghana, a para church organisation. Originally known as Aglow Women's Ministries International with over 255 fellowships throughout Ghana, Aglow International-Ghana's monthly meetings are simultaneously held at the Independence Square and in public venues across the other nine regions of Ghana for symbolic reasons—as a national event. The focus of the groups is to intercede through prayer for the state. The name Aglow is based on Romans 12:11 “Be aglow and burning with the spirit” and it was formed to ensure that God's will is established on earth as it is in heaven.⁵¹¹

The group usually premises its prayers on biblical texts and interpretations that show the feminine responsibility and ability in the body of Christ that qualifies women to pray for the nation. At Aglow meetings, members engage in travailing prayers. In their prayers, they thank God for his protection over the nation in the previous month and then make declarations of things they want God to do in the impending month. These supplications may be specific to the current pressing needs of the nation or a more general request. Symbolic dresses are prescribed for these meetings depending on the theme and the prayer points to be tackled. They usually put on black attire when praying about pressing national issues or calamities that might have befallen the nation such as floods and fire outbreaks. They, however, wear white and national colours when the nation has achieved a major feat or success say in a successful transfer of power or a major economic discovery, like an oil find.

For example, the Saturday, 15 March 2014 meeting of the group based on Jeremiah 33:6 was themed: “Behold, I bring health and healing to Ghana and will make them enjoy abundant peace and security, saith the Lord.” The prayer bulletins included thanking God for taking the nation through the first quarter of the year and rededicating the second quarter. There were specific petitions against natural disasters, as well as intercession against any misfortunes during the Easter festivities.⁵¹² The attire for this gathering was white, signalling God's blessings over the period.

Charismatic pastors claim that it is ‘travailing prayers’ that prevented any territorial and satanic agents that would have used occasions like the dispute over elections to plunge Ghana into war as is the case of other African countries⁵¹³ Charismatics see this prayer ritual preventing spirits from interfering in the political process as having been successful because

⁵¹¹ Aglow International-Ghana, “Aglow's Mission Statement,” Aglow International-Ghana, 2014, <http://www.aglowghana.org/index.php/2014-08-06-10-24-10/background>.

⁵¹² Graphic Online, “Aglow Holds Intercessory Prayers for Ghana,” Modern Ghana, March 13, 2014, <http://www.modernghana.com/news/529054/1/aglow-holds-intercessory-prayers-for-ghana.html>.

⁵¹³ Asamoah-Gyadu, “God Bless Our Homeland Ghana,” 172.

Ghana has since not degenerated into civil war over disputed elections, as is the case in other countries in the sub-region. This for them is enough evidence of the efficacy of their travelling prayers.⁵¹⁴

5.2.2 'Divine Predictions'

Though deliverance persists to date, the focus has shifted to the prophetic declaration⁵¹⁵ particularly 'divine predictions.' There is a shift from interpreting the reasons for the current challenges of the nation and praying to reverse these trends to forecasting the future of the nation. Hence, 'divine prediction' is an emergent form of political prophecy and a unique space of Pentecostal engagement with politics within Ghanaian Christianity. While previous historical surge in Prophetism gave hope and assurance of better times ahead in response to political crisis and or socio-economic difficulties, 'divine prediction,' as being witnessed in this present dispensation is different. It does not predict hope but rather predicts negative happenings and calamities including floods, fire and the deaths of high profile politicians including presidents.

Again, 'divine predictions' can be distinguished from the qualification for aspiring political candidates set by HMCs and older Pentecostal churches. HMCs usually required candidates to demonstrate that they are 'God fearing leaders.' On entering the political sphere, CPMs and CMs raised the bar by requiring that political leaders to repent of their sins and to represent the nation as it goes through a deliverance process to unlock its prosperity. The requirements for a predestined leader forecasted through 'divine prediction' is different. Overcoming or not overcoming one's sins, living or not living a morally upright life, is not a precondition to one receiving a favourable or unfavourable prophecy.⁵¹⁶ Therefore, with 'divine predictions,' one does not have to accumulate any religious credential as that leverage by Kwabena Darko in the 1992 electioneering campaign or be in a disadvantaged position as Rawlings was in the same campaign because of the human rights abuse his government had previously committed (sin). One can win political power irrespective of whether he has good character or has shown same in the past.

There are a range of prophecies which have caught political attention during the Fourth Republican era. These include a new prophecy on Christ's second coming and the role of Ghana

⁵¹⁴ Asamoah-Gyadu, "God Bless Our Homeland Ghana," 172.

⁵¹⁵ Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity*, 89.

⁵¹⁶ Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity*, 85.

(eschatological),⁵¹⁷ God's judgment upon Ghana for sinful acts like homosexuality, adultery, abortion (national curses) and natural and human disasters such as fires, floods and accidents (national calamities). The rest are the unexpected deaths of high profile people including Presidents and the forecasting of electoral outcomes.

The common form of these predictions is that which forecasts the outcome of political events and decisions and portends negative events or impending calamities. Pastors from this strand of Pentecostalism claim they are endowed with spiritual powers that can discern the cause of misfortunes in the life of an individual or a nation and at the same time make a declaration that can instantly curtail and break cycles of misfortune. This spiritual power can instantly diagnose one's problem (*abisa*) and prescribe a remedy (*akwankyire*) that is believed to stop any misfortune and impending danger and replace them with a better outcome. This contrasts with the long questionnaire required by the deliverance leaders of the CMs⁵¹⁸ that can be described as a trial and error approach since the deliverance leaders based their prayers on what the supplicants have told them.

It is therefore the contention of this study that the surge in 'divine prediction' is linked to the transitions in Pentecostal Christianity that currently favours the prophetic. That is to say the surge in 'divine predictions' is a new response of PMs to the challenges of members.

With the attraction towards the NPMs, there has been a reintroduction of prophetic ministry into the CoP and other CMCs, while prominent prosperity teachers like Duncan-Williams and David Oyedepo (Founder of Winners Chapel, headquarters in Nigeria) have repackaged themselves and remind their members of their prophetic gifting.⁵¹⁹ This is a striking indication of the potency and appeal of the prophetic ministry. Yet, the CMs and CPMs do not license prophetic freedom as do the NPMs. Prophets in this context sit under the authority of the pastors, or other senior leaders, and are scrutinised for their conformity to church doctrine, that is, CPC and NPC prophets are not self-authenticating. Saah has, for instance, argued that conventionally, in the Bible most of the prophet's understudy older prophets and in the process got their wings pruned to become more precise in their declarations.⁵²⁰ He complained:

⁵¹⁷ See for instance Peter Anamoh, *Re: Pastor Says It Is Wrong to Preach Jesus Christ* (Accra, 2015), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eJVHUNRZnvQ> and Peter Anamoh, "Interview with Prophet Peter Anamoh on the New Message on the Kingdom of God," Interview, *Christian Programme* (Accra: Hot Fm, January 25, 2015), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BVEeuysfSkY..>

⁵¹⁸ Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity*, 85.

⁵¹⁹ Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity*, 89-90. See also Enoch Darfah Frimpong, "Political Division Threatens Country's Stability," 08 April 2013 <https://www.graphic.com.gh/news/politics/political-division-threatens-country-s-stability-duncan-williams.html>

⁵²⁰ Interview with Saah.

You wake up one morning and somebody from nowhere. ... They have not understudied anyone, they don't have any fathers, nobody calls them to order, there is no accountability and they are freewheeling all over the place dishing out prophecies that does not come to pass but, in the Bible, systematically, things produce after their kind; Elisha, Elijah ... Moses, Joshua⁵²¹

Hence for CMs, prophets who have not undergone any training may not have the experience to discern and interpret correctly a particular prophecy received from God. As Saah puts it: "in every case, the more experienced and the deeper the prophet is, the more he can take on issues beyond his territory and per view and expect that God will honour them ..."⁵²² In essence, the depths, intensity, density and dimensions of a prophecy will be based on the experience of the prophet.

One of the basic reasons for the popularity of political prophecies in Ghana is the Pentecostal theology that parallels the cosmological understanding of most Ghanaians. The Ghanaian traditional this-worldly understanding of salvation that interprets life existentially is similar to that of the PMs.⁵²³ It is believed that for one to achieve success in life, one has to have a harmonious relationship with the spirit world which is believed to give meaning to physical life and thus has control over it.⁵²⁴ Politicians as public figures are believed to be mostly exposed to spiritual attacks because of the power they wield in the country. They, therefore, seek spirit resources to protect themselves against any evil that may impede or truncate their political career and ambitions. In securing this protection, politicians are open to embracing any new spiritual sources that claim to be more potent than other existing and established ones that they have previously sourced or are currently making use of.

Thus, a spiritual power that does not only foretell future political events but can also re-negotiate before God to change a destined plan in favour of their a political actor as the case studies in this chapter will show is an important attraction. This is an important attraction for many Ghanaians who are mindful of choosing leaders after 'God's heart' and for politicians who can access this spiritual power to preserve their lives and ensure success in political life as well as having proof of having been predestined to hold political power. This accounts for⁵²⁵ the popularity of 'predictive prophecy' by Neo-Prophetic pastors. Consider a general statement on this claim by Prophet Isaac Owusu Bempah in a radio interview on this issue

⁵²¹ Interview with Saah.

⁵²² Interview with Saah.

⁵²³ Quayesi-Amakye, "Ghana's New Prophetism."

⁵²⁴ Larbi, "The Nature of Continuity and Discontinuity of the Ghanaian Pentecostal Concept of Salvation in African Cosmology." See also Adrian Hastings, "From Agbebi to Diangienda: Independency and Prophetism," in *The Church in Africa, 1450-1950* (Oxford: Oxford Scholarship Online, 2003), 530.

⁵²⁵ Joseph Quayesi-Amakye, "Prosperity and Prophecy in African Pentecostalism," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 20 (2011): 296.

Look, I Owusu Bempah, that you are speaking to, I am not arrogant, please forgive me, but I am not a mere pastor. I am not boosting, I can stand before God to turn things (change). It is not only the politicians that God has entrusted the state to. We the modest prophets who you see are capable of changing things... I will not boost, but I can turn the atmosphere for Ghana to turn in a certain way (direction)... If you are a President and you do not do the right thing, I know what to do to make you lose elections and I am not bragging ... I am telling you the truth... do not play with me... God has taken us (prophets) to the highest pedestal and I want all Ghanaians to understand that.⁵²⁶

Another reason for the popularity of divine predictions in political circles is the claim of Neo-prophets to be capable of negotiating in the spiritual sphere on behalf of others. This shifts the burden to the prophet and requires less effort on the part of political actors—in comparison with other sources of spiritual power like deliverance that requires those sourcing spiritual interventions to dedicate themselves to prayers and fasting. In standing in for their clients, NPMs pastors claim they can discern the death of high profile people and avert the death by interceding before God to secure such a person's life. Consider Prophet Derick Ampem's (Holy Ghost Triumphant Prayer Group, Sydney, Australia) prophetic revelation at the 31st December 2016 'all night service' of his church, ahead of the swearing in of the President elect, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo Addo.

I saw the presidential throne (Presidential seat in Parliament) has been turned over with a red cloth tied to it and the man who was to sit on the throne (then President Elect) was running from the throne. As I prayed further God showed me that there are attempts to let the President Elect go mad before his swearing in on 7 January (2017). We have prayed and spoken to powerful prophets back home in Ghana and they are also praying... there are people who are scheming in the spirit ... but he will ascend the throne. As I prayed, the Lord showed me, I saw a certain man, I saw a certain man, and the Lord told me he is demonic. I will tell you his name... He is the one consulting 'fetish priests' on behalf of the party that has lost the elections to achieve this objective. He is called 'General Mosquito'... Asiedu Nketia, (General Secretary of the National Democratic Congress) do you know him? ... He is demonic...before the end of the year (2017) he (Asiedu Nketia) will go mad... please write it down, write.⁵²⁷

In this prophetic revelation, the President elect does not need to go through a process to avert this spiritual plan against him because the prophet has through prayer averted the alleged plot of Nketia, whom he claims is leading that diabolic subversion.

Yet, another attraction to 'divine predictions' is the claim that the alternative provided by NPMs pastors is from a pure source (God) and more potent than that provided by AIR priests as well as the deliverance sessions suggested by CPCs and NPCs.⁵²⁸ NPMs pastors, for instance, claim that while the ritual processes required by African Indigenous priests require

⁵²⁶ Isaac Owusu Bempah, I Can Turn Things Spiritually to Make a Bad President Lose Elections, Radio Interview, July 13, 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S8b0kEiJYRk>.

⁵²⁷ Derick Ampem, Prophecy About Ghana's Presidency and the Year 2017, You Tube, January 3, 2017, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_ke5RlZV624.

⁵²⁸ Interview John Yaw Adu, February 5, 2015.

more personal investment and elaborate methods it is not powerful. They allege that some of the processes involved in the African indigenous processes involve ritual murders and the use of human blood; while those offered by the CPCs and NPCs also involve long weeks of fasting, prayers and deliverance sessions that do not usually address the issues because deliverance ministers do not have the ‘anointing’ to fully comprehend the spiritual cases presented to them. In contrast, they boast that what they offer is more proactive (preventive), the easiest and fastest way of having one’s problem dealt with. Consider the response of Bempah in 2012 when Bishop Charles Agyin-Asare (the Presiding Bishop of the Word Miracle Church International now Perez Chapel International) and Rev. Steve Wengham (Head Pastor of Cedar Mountain Chapel of the Assemblies of God, Ghana) challenged his prophecy that then sitting President, John Dramani Mahama, was going to die:

I am saying I have received a prophecy that if we do not pray (Ghanaians) our President will die this year (2012), Bishop Agyin-Asare and the Assemblies of God’s pastor are not prophets, so they should shout up... in 2011 I prophesied that the then President Mills and Former Vice President, Alieu Mahama were going to die and it happened, what did they do about it. Why are they criticising my prophecy, they do not know what they are saying... God has spoken to me... they should mark it on the wall...I will not listen to them ... they do not understand the work and the mandate of a prophet. I will continue to pray to avert the death. They do not read the bible. I think when they finish eating they just go to bed with their big bellies and talk foolishly.⁵²⁹

Hence, in venturing into the political sphere, Neo-prophetic pastors, through ‘divine predictions,’ have created an avenue which they can leverage at the religious and political levels by challenging “existing power and hierarchies in their trajectories of ascension.”⁵³⁰ In the process, Neo-Prophetic pastors have assumed more prominence in religious divination into political affairs with the Ghanaian media seeking their interpretations and views on happenings within political circles and the country as a whole.

5.3.0 Case Studies of ‘Divine Prediction’

‘Divine predictions,’ as a new-normal approach of Pentecostal engagement with politics have become prevalent during the Fourth Republic. The most common of these ‘divine predictions’ are those involving the forecasting of the outcome of presidential elections and the death of high profile political actors. This form of political prophecy usually attracts national discourse, especially on public radio not only because of the pre-Christian notion of spiritual causality, but more importantly because of the negative consequences it invokes for the nation and

⁵²⁹ Isaac Owusu Bempah, Prophecy Concerning the Death of President John Dramani Mahama, Radio, February 12, 2013, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5pMi9vvurHw>.

⁵³⁰ Karen Lauterbach, *Christianity, Wealth, and Spiritual Power in Ghana* (Cham: Springer Nature, 2017), 12.

generally the alleged element of the unknown that is now revealed to the public⁵³¹—previously restricted to those within the ‘spiritual circles.’⁵³² This section will focus on two major forms of divine predictions, namely the forecasting of presidential elections and the predictive death of high profile political actors are the most pervasive and the one this chapter is focused on.

5.3.1 Electoral Predictions

Elections are an important aspect of every democracy and that which involves the participation of most national citizens. Sadly, elections in Africa have often generated conflicts as indicated in chapter two. This is because of the quest of many governments to win political power by all means, including rigging of polls, intimidation as well as the leveraging of any spiritual power to their advantage. Consequently, a prophecy that claims to know the outcome of elections and capable of re-negotiating such results to secure a win, is an indispensable source for political actors to exploit to their advantage as well as an important matter for public discourse for a population that is influenced by spiritual causality.

By electoral predictions I mean the “pre-election declarations in the public sphere, pertaining to the outcome of national elections, by religious clerics who attribute their revelations to the will of God.”⁵³³ ‘Divine predictions’ of electoral outcomes are usually made in favour of the two largest political parties in Ghana (the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the New Patriotic Party (NPP)), especially in the run-up to presidential and parliamentary elections. Though predictions are made for all candidates in these elections, those relating to the presidential candidates of those two parties always gain more media attention and generate much public discussion.

Bempah is one prophet who has usually predicted elections in favour of the NPP, though he claims to have prophesied the presidency of Mills. Bempah gained popularity in Ghana for his prophecies about the country and public officials since the late 1990s. In one such prophecy, he declared at a 31st December 2011 ‘Crossover Night’ service that there was going to be confusion over the 2012 presidential elections. He claimed that he saw in a vision the two flags of the then opposition NPP and that of the then incumbent NDC, with the national flag of Ghana in the middle. But that of the NPP, which was held high as a sign of victory, was

⁵³¹ At the beginning of every year or after a particular national happening (major fire outbreaks in public places or flooding) radio panellist and those who contribute via phone-ins are invited to access such predictions and at other times discuss others that might have taken place. Sometimes, the prophet who uttered the prophecy is invited to comment or explain as to whether a particular happening is related to his/her prediction.

⁵³² Yong, “Renewing the Public Square II.”

⁵³³ Emmanuel Sackey, “Election Prophecies and Political Stability in Ghana,” in *Christian Citizens and the Moral Regeneration of the African State* (Milton: Taylor and Francis, 2018), 49.

quickly pulled down by someone. He interpreted this to mean that, if the NPP did not intensify their prayers, they would win the 2012 elections, but their victory was going to be taken away from them and this could lead to violence. Although he fell short of explaining who pulled down the NPP flag, it was clear to many who heard this prophecy that he was referring to the possibility of the incumbent manipulating the electoral process in their favour.

Bempah's 2012 prophecy is contradicted by Prophet Stephen Adom Kyei-Duah's, (Believers Worship Centre, Kumasi) who had prophesised that the NDC was going to win the election, but claimed he had the power to turn the tables in favour of the NPP if they consulted him. In a sermon published at the website of the church he explained to his congregants as to how he could secure electoral victory for the New Patriotic Party in the 2012 election:

I called Honourable Sampson Kwaku Boafo (Former Minister of Chieftaincy and Culture, and Former Member of Parliament for Subin Consistency) and others ...took them to the website, the Believers website, to see all that I have said (past prophecies) ... listen to me, if you can it will help you. The election we are about to have (2012) will not be in favour of the NPP... At this stage, forget about prayers and the consultation of pastors. I am giving you the *apoo* (local parlance for the right answer or solution). Just as Rebecca gave to Isaac, that is what I wanted to do to help. All I asked for was an opportunity to see the man (the NPP Presidential Candidate for 2012 election). I did all I could, but the opportunity was not given me up till date (5 December 2012). The prophecy is for the NDC (to win the election), but just as the prophecy was for Esau, but Rebecca was able to negotiate for Isaac to receive it (inheritance) that is what I wanted to do to help (the NPP).⁵³⁴

Despite this counter prophecy, the NPP saw some developments ahead of the elections as confirmation of Bempah's prophecy. Prior to the 2012 general elections, forty-five new constituencies were created. This development was controversial, and challenged by the NPP minority in parliament. According to the NPP, most of the new constituencies were carved out of NDC strongholds to make it easy for the party to win more seats to control parliament. After the NPP minority failed to block the bill in Parliament, it pursued the issue in the Supreme Court, but the suit was dismissed. These developments led some supporters of the NPP and other media communicators to conclude that the events were glimpses of the confusion the Prophet predicted.

The creation of new constituencies is a constitutional obligation that is undertaken by the Electoral Commission of Ghana. Thus, ordinarily, the Electoral Commission, in carrying out this exercise, fulfilled article 47 (5) of the 1992 constitution,⁵³⁵ which mandates it to review and where necessary, alter the electoral boundaries of the country every seven years or after every census—whichever comes first. This was also not the first time the Electoral Commission

⁵³⁴ Stephen Adom Kyei-Duah, Ghana 2012 Election Prophecy, You Tube, June 21, 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3KO8xwjrLJU>.

⁵³⁵ Government of Ghana, "1992 Constitution," 45.

altered the electoral boundaries. In 2003, it carried out a similar exercise after the 2000 Census; this led to the creation of thirty new constituencies.⁵³⁶ However, despite the constitutionality of the process and the pronouncement of the Supreme Court, most supporters of the NPP were not satisfied. This was so because the perception of the abuse of incumbency and the manipulation of state institutions, including the Commissioner and other deputies of the Electoral Commission, is rife within the Ghanaian public sphere. Therefore, a prophecy about the possibility of a ‘stolen verdict’ in the election directed at an incumbent was given credence, especially by the opposition and its supporters.

In the end, the NPP lost the elections and did not accept the outcome, claiming there were some irregularities. The party petitioned the Supreme Court challenging the Electoral Commission’s declaration, but that Petition was also dismissed. Bempah has since insisted that the NPP lost the elections because the party did not heed his caution to focus on prayers to God instead of consulting other lesser gods that are not potent. Again, Ghana did not experience the violence he predicted because his church and some well-meaning Ghanaians prayed against it.

Yet it was not only the 2012 elections that witnessed contradictory prophecies. That of 2016 and 2008 saw prophecies being made in favour of the NPP and NDC. For example, in 2016 Bempah’s prophecy that the NPP would win the 2016 elections was countered by two Neo-Prophetic pastors who claimed Bempah as their “spiritual father.” Like the 2012 elections, Bempah’s s prophecy of NPP victory, also came with a caveat: the NPP would win the 2016 elections if they prayed and stopped consulting other gods.⁵³⁷ This was, however, countered by Prophet Akwasi Agyeman Prempeh (General Overseer, Springs of Joy, International Ministries) who predicted the NDC would win instead and Prophet Emmanuel Badu Kobi who claimed that the NPP Presidential candidate (and not the prayers of the NPP as a party as Bempah claimed) needed to go through some spiritual process to guarantee his win. Prempeh for instance noted in a television interview (the same platform Bempah made his claim):

In the realms of the spirit, the Lord has chosen our President (then incumbent John Mahama of the NDC) ...in the realms of the spirit where our President is standing, he is very far... and where he is in the spirit, I can tell you that there is no close gap, with his position in the spirit ... I can say boldly on this set that the Lord that minister to me (says) he is going to outdoor our President of this nation publicly and in the ears of everybody. God is about to affirm.⁵³⁸

⁵³⁶ Electoral Commission of Ghana, *The 2004 Presidential and Parliamentary Elections* (Accra: Electoral Commission of Ghana, 2005), 1, 12, 16.

⁵³⁷ “Rev. Owusu Bempah Declares Nana Addo Winner of 2016 Election,” March 2, 2015, <http://elections.peacefonline.com/pages/politics/201503/234119.php?page=2&storyid=100&s>.

⁵³⁸ Akwasi Agyemang Prempeh, 2016 Prophecies, Television, January 6, 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tCid16pScp0>.

Kobi, on the other hand, admonished the NPP flagbearer noting that there was something that had prevented the presidential candidate from winning elections having lost the 2008 and 2012 elections and that until he purged himself, the presidency would elude him once again.⁵³⁹ Kobi notes in an interview: “if Nana (Presidential Candidate) wants to win the election (2016), he knows what to do. If he doesn’t do it, President Mahama (the incumbent) will once again and snatch victory from him...spiritually, if you look at it, Nana Addo has won the election but how to make that manifest in the physical realm is another issue.”⁵⁴⁰

Following these two prophecies that contradicted Bempah’s prophecy, Bempah in response to Prempeh insisted that the latter was wrong, but amended his earlier prophecy to align with that of Kobi’s, by admitting that Nana Addo needed to avail himself to a prophet. Bempah reined in his spiritual son’s counter prophecy by affirming:

Concerning what my son and brother, Prophet Badu Kobi said, he was very right and was speaking the truth. I know the things he was talking about and the revelations he put out. Badu Kobi was very right that Nana Addo has to avail himself to a man of God for particular type of prayers and intercession to be done for him. That was a very true prophecy and we are working on that aspect very very well. Prayer warriors, pastors and intercessors are all tarrying in prayer for Nana Addo. Personally too, I have gone before God over this matter and doing some of the things Prophet Kobi said must be done before Nana Addo can become president. I can assure you we have broken things, (overcome spiritual forces) and this is a new Nana Addo. This new Nana Addo is spiritually sound, all curses have been broken and very soon we shall meet again one on one for further directions and consultations. There is no cause for alarm at all as far as the spiritual battles are concerned. Leave that aspect to me and to God. And I am telling you that God has told me Nana Addo shall be president of Ghana by the time we enter the year 2017.⁵⁴¹

In essence the veracity or otherwise of the prophecy seems less important than the questions of spiritual legitimacy. This is because while counter, contradictory and ‘amendment’ of these prophecies raise the credibility of these forecasts, political parties still appropriate such declarations in their favour. The invitation to these prophets at party and state functions⁵⁴² and the recognition of their spiritual support towards a candidate’s victory as was the case in the victory speech of the NPP as well as the applause that was generated in comparison to the naming of other pastors from other denominations is an indication of how these prophets are trusted in political circles.⁵⁴³

⁵³⁹ Daily Guide, “Badu Kobi Is Right but Nana Addo Shall Win - Owusu Bempah,” General New, *Daily Guide Africa*, October 3, 2016.

⁵⁴⁰ Daily Guide, “Badu Kobi Is Right.”

⁵⁴¹ Daily Guide, “Badu Kobi Is Right..”

⁵⁴² Ghana Web, “I’m Forming a Prayer Team for Akufo-Addo – Rev. Owusu Bempah, General News *Ghana Web*, 12 December 2016; Ghana Web, “Rev. Owusu Bempah Leads NPP Vigil in Koforidua,” General News, *Ghana Web*, 17 November 2016 and Daily Guide Africa, Owusu-Bempah Leads Akufo-Addo Prayers, News, *Daily Guide Africa*, 11 April 2017.

⁵⁴³ See Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, President-Elect Nana Akufo-Addo’s Full Victory Speech, December 9, 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-9ftHSRODk4>.

Yet another widely reported prophecy was that made retrospectively after the 2008 elections that claimed the NDC was to win that election. The prophecy was reportedly pronounced by Temitope Babatunde Joshua, a prophet from Nigeria who heads the Synagogue Church of All Nations, which has a branch in Ghana. Joshua is a televangelist with his own television station called Emmanuel TV. He is well known for his prophecies, including his alleged prediction of the November 2015 terror attack in France and the disappearance of a Malaysian plane in 2014.

His prophecy concerning the 2008 election was made public when Prof. John Atta Mills (then incumbent President of Ghana) visited the Synagogue to thank God and the Prophet for his prophecy concerning his winning of the presidential elections in Ghana. President Mills revealed during the thanksgiving service that Joshua had prophesied to him that the elections were going to be decided in three rounds.⁵⁴⁴ In that election, none of the eight initial candidates for President received the required votes (50% plus one vote) to win in the first round. A second round of voting was conducted on 28 December in all electoral areas except for the Tain constituency. The outcome was too close to call. Hence, an election in Tain was necessary before a declaration could be made. Mills emerged as the eventual winner. Explaining what exactly he told Mills in the said prophecy, T.B. Joshua said:

He comes to church here nearly every Sunday. So, on one occasion, he told me that the Ghanaian presidential election would be held on December 7, 2008, and that the results would be announced a few days later. And I told him that I don't see it that way. Rather, I saw three different elections ahead of him then. I also told him the results would be announced in January 2009. By the grace of God, he believed in the prophecy, we prayed over it and we glorify God that it came to pass.⁵⁴⁵

This prophecy was declared in private and it is difficult for one to verify its authenticity. However, there is a background to Mills's win which explains his strong belief in prophecy. A close friend of Prof. Mills, Mr. Worlanyo Agra (former Chief Executive of the National Sports Authority) revealed in an interview with this author that President Mills had long been told on several occasions by different pastors that he was going to be a President. These included Dr Morris Cerullo (a Renowned Evangelist and the President of Morris Cerullo World Evangelism), Rev. Dr Seth Ablorh (President and Founder of Manna Mission Inc. Ghana), and Bishop Charles Agyin-Asare (Perez Chapel) among others. Agra claims that this prophecy which was once communicated to then President Jerry John Rawlings (founder of the NDC), by Morris Cerullo influenced the former's decision to hand pick Mills as the Presidential

⁵⁴⁴ Halifax Ansah, "Joshua, Man behind Mills," Website, The Ghanaian Journal, February 23, 2009, <http://theoghanaianjournal.com/author/admin/html..>

⁵⁴⁵ Ansah, "Joshua, Man behind Mills."

Candidate of the NDC in 1999. This decision called the ‘Swedru declaration,’ was not supported by others in the party, who subsequently broke away to form the Reform Party in 2000 and later Democratic Freedom Party in 2006.

Agra claims again that it was a prophet (Prophet Awumer,) within the prayer group set to pray for Mills’s who revealed the actual reason Mills had lost two elections in 2000 and 2004 to the NPP despite the revelation that he was to become a President.⁵⁴⁶ While the actual reasons for Mill’s electoral defeat were not revealed, the advice from the Prophet was for Mills to choose a Christian as his running mate (Vice Presidential Candidate) for the 2008 election, which he did.⁵⁴⁷ The choice of John Mahama, a Christian from Northern Ghana, also led to disagreements in the party because the founder of the party and others preferred a Muslim, their opponents, the NPP having then won two elections on a Muslim-Christian ticket.

Another significant development in Mills’s campaign ahead of the 2008 elections, was the near resignation of Mills as Presidential candidate of the NDC because of ill health and pressure from within the party that his campaign did not give any hope that he would win that election.⁵⁴⁸ Agra reports that a last-minute prophecy from the prayer group led Mills to rescind his decision to resign. He sums up his advice to Mills following that prophecy.

This is how far the Lord has brought us and we have to live our testimonies. I was with you when this statement came (reference to another prophecy), I was with you when we went to Cote d’Ivoire in 1974, when a Muslim man, who you gave a donation ... said this is the President of your country.... Have you forgotten all these things they have said? You said you want to serve the nation ... you were told I was your Mordechai and I am telling you, like Esther, you don’t know why at this time, I have come. I was told (by the Prophet), stop what you want to do. The devil is just drumming fear into you. You will win this election (2008).⁵⁴⁹

Agra’s claim is significant, as it re-enforces the influence of spirituality in political circles, in this very case predictive prophecy. It demonstrates the premium political actors place on the prophetic in political decisions. While Mills had many Pentecostal and HMCs leaders who prayed with him and travelled with him extensively,⁵⁵⁰ it was ‘divine predictions’ that was a key consideration at crucial moments of making decisions that defined his political career.

⁵⁴⁶ The prayer group was formed following the advice of the Very Rev. Dr Emmanuel Kormla Gbordze (Former Moderator of the Global Evangelical Church). This was corroborated by Rev. Gbordze in an interview with this author in 2015.

⁵⁴⁷ Interview with Worlanyo Agra, February 25, 2015.

⁵⁴⁸ See Gye Nyame Concord, “N.D.C. Flies in a German Doctor,” News, *Gye Nyame Concord* (Accra), 21 September 2008, 1&3 and Emmanuel Adu Gyamah, “NDC Reprimands Teye Nyaunu,” Politics, *Daily Graphic* (Accra), 1 February 2008, 16.

⁵⁴⁹ Interview with Agra

⁵⁵⁰ Interview with Emmanuel Kormla Gbordzoe, February 4, 2015; Interview with Amo Darko, December 16, 2014.

Hence his decision to trust in the prophecy of Prophet Joshua that he was to win the 2018 elections, since it was a confirmation of what he had already been told by other prophets.

In essence ‘divine predictions’ have an implicit influence on political decisions. Agra for instance claims that Mills made very good use of prophecies from prophets at his disposal. After his election in 2008, President Mills set up a prayer group at the seat of government where pastors from Prophet Joshua’s church, among others prayed to give him spiritual directions in the determination of matters of the state.⁵⁵¹ In one instance, Mills waited for hours before embarking on a trip to Nigeria because Agra was on his way to deliver a prophecy concerning the appointments of new commissioners at the Electoral Commission. The advice in the said prophecy was for him to appoint different people instead of those already proposed as qualified and deserving of the position. This was because such appointees would serve the interest of the opposition and the NDC would lose the 2012 election. Agra claims the NDC won the 2012 because those appointed remained neutral and conducted the election in a transparent manner.⁵⁵²

This is a proactive step that is introducing a new form of religious validation of political decisions that was not hitherto emphasised in religious engagement with politics in Ghana. Rt. Rev Emmanuel Kormla Gbordzoe (former Moderator of the Global Evangelical Presbyterian Church), one of the ministers who prayed with President Mills sums up the importance of spirituality to the latter’s presidency:

Jesus is our source of authority, so if you want to rule with authority, then you must rule with Jesus and that is what President Mills did. I believe the prayers helped him and his heart was on God. Future Presidents should believe in the word of God and prayer; it would bring the blessings of God on the nation.⁵⁵³

Hence, while prophethood no longer seems to be a viable route for a religious-inspired counter to the post-colonial predicament or the post-colonial state,⁵⁵⁴ it has nonetheless become a viable root for prophetic influence in political decision making.

5.3.2 Death Predictions

Death Predictions are part of what can be termed as negative prophecies that usually predict doom and painful happenings, particularly among political actors and other prominent personalities like celebrities, chiefs and clergymen. Such prophecies usually concern events that are predicted to take place within a year. This type of political prophecy typically focuses

⁵⁵¹ Interview with Agra.

⁵⁵² Interview with Agra.

⁵⁵³ Interview with Gbordzoe.

⁵⁵⁴ van Dijk, “Pentecostalism and the Politics of Prophetic Power,” 179.

on actions (or inactions) of politicians that are held to put their lives in peril. Examples include the prophecy of the Rev. Prof. Enoch Immanuel Amanor Agbozo (Founder of Ghana Evangelical Society) concerning the wrath of God over the decision of then President Mills in 2009 to declare Nkrumah as the ‘founder’ of Ghana.⁵⁵⁵ Another is that of Bempah that predicts that the then sitting President, John Mahama, would die in 2013 if prayers were not said for him. These two prophecies do not only depict the pervasiveness of predictive prophecies during the period under review, but more importantly, the different attitudes of the older PMs towards prophecies emanating from Neo-Prophetic pastors like Bempah and that from their members like that of Agbozo who is a member of the Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Council.

Unlike other prophecies that are orally declared, those by Agbozo are usually written and distributed among various Christian umbrella groups, to government, opposition parties and other civil society organisations.⁵⁵⁶ As a background to Mills’ decision to declare Nkrumah as the founder of Ghana, Agbozo avers that in 1975 God directed him to ‘rebuild’ Ghana following Nkrumah’s decision to seal the soul of the nation with the authority of other gods. He notes of this development in one of his prophecies:

Osagyefo Dr Kwame Nkrumah (first President of Ghana) had instituted a spiritual force and system for building the nation. That the said force and system is an ‘Accursed Thing.’ That, the ‘Accursed Thing,’ should not be allowed to stand. It must be cast out and not allowed space and place in the nation building process and the country’s affairs as a whole. Otherwise the nation’s forward march onto her destined glory as a nation and people of God will not see the light of day.⁵⁵⁷

He explains that this ‘Accursed Thing’ was a major factor behind the overthrow of Nkrumah and his Convention People’s Party. The Ghana Evangelical Society was, therefore, formed to specifically reverse Nkrumah’s action. The mission started in 1975 and was to be achieved through missionary activities based on the biblical books of Haggai, Ezra and Nehemiah.⁵⁵⁸

As part of God’s directive, Agbozo claims he undertook two special crusades in 1978 in Nkroful (Nkrumah’s hometown) and Axim (Western Region of Ghana). These were aimed at casting out the ‘Accursed Thing’ and neutralising the negative spiritual influence of the Nkrumah factor on national development and prosperity.⁵⁵⁹ According to Agbozo the Spirit of

⁵⁵⁵ The idea of Nkrumah being the founder of Ghana is a matter of political dispute between the two major political blocks in Ghana. While the NPP that traces its origins to the United Gold Coast Convention Party claims Nkrumah was one of the founding fathers of Ghana, the NDC that claims to be Nkrumahist insists Nkrumah is the sole founder of Ghana because he is the one who insisted on self-government from the British as against the gradual transfer of power (self-government in the shortest possible time) championed by the United Coast Party.

⁵⁵⁶ Interview with Enoch Immanuel Agbozo, March 10, 2015.

⁵⁵⁷ Enoch Immanuel Agbozo, “Better Ghana Agenda—An Accursed Thing?” August 4, 2014, <https://www.modernghana.com/print/566901/1/betterghanaagendaanaccursedthing.html>.

⁵⁵⁸ Interview with Agbozo.

⁵⁵⁹ Agbozo, “An Accursed Thing.”

God led him personally in a spiritual battle to release the national flag and Coat of Arms from the negative influence of a spiritual power behind them.⁵⁶⁰ With his mission accomplished in October 2005, Ghana, he claimed, had been restored as a nation of God.⁵⁶¹ After Ghana's 'restoration', Agbozo claimed Ghana witnessed the spiritual effect of a divine seed that was sown with the Ghana Evangelical Society playing a symbolic catalytic role.⁵⁶² In essence, he claimed that divine intervention, through the agency of his ministry, ended the spiritual oppression.

However, in 2009, President Mills resurrected this 'Accursed Thing' when his government decided to declare Nkrumah the 'founder' of Ghana, spiritually re-instating the 'Accursed Thing' in the process. To Agbozo, this action reversed the progress that had taken root during the presidency of J.A. Kuffour (1993-2009). Agbozo accused the NDC Government for failing to recognise the fall of Nkrumah as an act of God. He declared:

President Atta Mills had desecrated the divine redemption of heavenly peace and Kingdom glory image and standing of Ghana as star of Africa. He was committed to overturning the divine standing of Jesus Christ as reconciler, deliverer, redeemer, Prince of Peace, governor and king of glory of the new Ghana born out of the ashes of the old postcolonial Nkrumah ordered and controlled Ghana overshadowed by political dictatorship and oppression, atheistic philosophical scientificism, ideological coercion and oppression under one party monarchy type Republican state and idolatrous multi-deity blood sacrificing Pan African Ghana/Africa.⁵⁶³

For such a decision, Agbozo claims Mills was called home (died) to stop what he describes as 'Satan man agenda.' Mills' death, Agbozo explains, was because the kingdom of God suffered violence following the former's decision which provoked divine wrath and judgment on Ghana. Hence, Mills's death on 24 July 2012 is seen by Agbozo as the manifestation of his prophecy against the former's decision.

It is important to note that other prophets like Bempah and Prophet Peter Anamoh⁵⁶⁴ had prophesied about the demise of Mills, although no link can be made between Agbozo's prophecy and these death prophecies. Bempah predicted the deaths of President Mills and former Vice President, Alhaji Aliu Mahama, on 31 December 2011. Indeed, Aliu Mahama also passed away in 2012. In his prophecy, Bempah did not reveal the reasons why President Mills was going to die at the time, but he has recently claimed that he was poisoned by some people

⁵⁶⁰ Agbozo "An Accursed Thing."

⁵⁶¹ Interview with Agbozo.

⁵⁶² Interview with Agbozo..

⁵⁶³ Agbozo, "An Accursed Thing."

⁵⁶⁴ See Afua Hirsch, Ghana's Celebrity Preachers Clash Over Prophecy of President's Death, *Guardian African Network*, 27 February 2013, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/feb/27/ghana-celebrity-preachers-clash>; Ghanarising.org, "Prophet Anamoh Told Ghanaians Mills Won't Finish His Term as President," *Modern Ghana*, General News, 13 August 2012, <https://www.modernghana.com/news/411189/prophet-anamoh-told-ghanaians-mills-wont-finish-his-term-as.html#>

at the seat of government. Bempah claimed the perpetrators were concerned that because of Mill's ill health, he was not going to be able to campaign effectively to guarantee the party a second term in the 2012 elections.⁵⁶⁵ Bempah has challenged those who disagree with him to release the autopsy report on Mills's death—a report that has since not been made public.

Nonetheless, there is also the possibility that these prophecies of Agbozo, Bempah and Anamoh about the death of Mills are just a coincidence. This is because, before Mills became President, it was public knowledge that he had been battling with a medical condition since the NDC exited government in 2000. Mills had publicly indicated that he once went to South Africa for the treatment for his sinusitis and a cataract.⁵⁶⁶ His health status was a major campaign issue when he stood for the NDC presidential primaries in 2007 and the national campaign in 2008.⁵⁶⁷ He actually died about 6 months after his return from a medical check-up in the United States of America. Therefore, it can be said that Mills died of natural causes and not necessarily because of any of the three prophecies concerning his death. Meaning, the pastors who predicted Mills's death were aware of his ill health and the possibility that he would die from his ailment.

The prophecies concerning the death of Mills are by no means an isolated case. Bempah, who also predicted the death of the successor of Mills—Mahama, in 2012, claimed in an interview ahead of the 2016 elections that Mahama was going to lose that election because he had the blood of Atta Mills on his hands. He noted, “In the run up to the 2016 elections, I had a vision of President Mahama in chains – on his neck, legs and on his hands. The seat of the President has been turned upside down to show that it was empty and that a successor was required...so I knew the President would lose the 2016 elections.”⁵⁶⁸

However, Bempah did not draw any connection between the death of Mills and his prophecy that Mahama would die in 2012. Nonetheless, the predicted death of the then sitting President, Mahama, generated a lot of public discussion because this was a second prophecy concerning the death of an incumbent president. Significantly, for our purpose the ensuing episodes following this prophecy demonstrates how Neo-Prophetic pastors are challenging the

⁵⁶⁵ Adom Online, Atta Mills was poisoned - Owusu Bempah, Modern Ghana, General News, 3 December 2016, <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/election2008/Atta-Mills-was-poisoned-Owusu-Bempah-492078>

⁵⁶⁶ Prof. Mills, interviewed by Joy FM, *Prof. Mills Returns from South Africa*, Private Broadcasting System, 11 June 2008.

⁵⁶⁷ Acheampong, “Religion and Politics in Ghana,” 125.

⁵⁶⁸ Daily Guide Africa, “Mahama Not Destined to Become President Again- Owusu Bempah,” *Daily Guide Africa*, General News, December 30, 2016, <http://dailyguideafrica.com/mahama-not-destined-become-president-rev-owusu-bempah/>

leverage of other older PMs to speak to spiritual issues in the political sphere and how the latter are responding to these challenges.

Mahama's death prophecy was given on 31 December 2012, during the end of year 'watch night service' of Bempah's church—a time when some prophets engaged in prophetic politics often predicting events in the succeeding year. Bempah subsequently complained in an interview on Adom TV's Pampaso and Adom FM's Dwaso Nsem (Multimedia platforms in Accra), on 8 February 2013, that he had not been successful in his attempts at reaching the President to inform him about the prophecy. He noted that a similar situation took place when he prophesied about Mills and Vice President Aliu Mahama on 31 December 2011.⁵⁶⁹ He claimed that these personalities eventually died because there was no intercession to avert their deaths. Like his other conditional prophecies, he emphasised that the impending calamity could be averted if the entire nation, especially the President, sought God's intervention through prayer.

Nevertheless, Bempah's prophecy was challenged by Classical and Charismatic pastors within the Pentecostal ministry. Such challenges came from Agyin-Asare, Rev. Steve Wengham and Duncan-Williams. Agyin-Asare described Bempah's prophecy as 'pastorally and scripturally unethical' because of his recourse to the media.⁵⁷⁰ In a sermon on 10 February, 2013 at the Perez Dome in Accra, Agyin-Asare told his congregation that the sole purpose of Bempah's prophecy was "to create panic and despair."⁵⁷¹ In explaining his reason for criticising the prophecy, he observed that the only time prophets made public a particular prophecy was when the leader refused to repent.⁵⁷² He made a prophetic declaration to cancel that which had been issued by Bempah. He declared: "As an Apostle and a Prophet of God, I neutralise anything prophesied against the President, spoken against him, invoked against him, any psychic commands and demands and any agreements of witches and wizards and I decree that the counsel of the Lord alone concerning him (the President) shall stand."⁵⁷³

In a similar fashion, Wengham, in a radio interview, criticised Bempah's handling of the prophecy. He described Bempah's prophecy as a populist act. He also asked Ghanaians to disregard it because it did not come from God. Citing 1 Corinthians 14:3, he argued that this

⁵⁶⁹ Frank Agyei-Twum, "John Mahama will die this year unless... Rev Owusu Bempah," Adomonline.com, February 8, 2013, <http://edition.myjoyonline.com/pages/news/201302/101142.php>.

⁵⁷⁰ Radio Xyz Online, "Agyin Asare Rescues John Mahama from the Prophecy of Death," General News, *Radio Xyz Online*, (February 11, 2013), <https://www.modernghana.com/news/444872/1/agyin-asare-rescues-john-mahama-from-the-prophecy-.html>.

⁵⁷¹ Radio Xyz Online, "Agyin Asare Rescues John Mahama. "

⁵⁷² Radio Xyz Online, "Agyin Asare Rescues John Mahama." See also Afua Hirsch, "Ghana's Celebrity Preachers Clash Over Prophecy of President's Death," *The Guardian*, 27 February, 2013

⁵⁷³ Radio Xyz Online "Agyin Asare Rescues John Mahama."

legitimate prophecy edifies, counsels and exhorts⁵⁷⁴ and that prophecy that creates fear and panic, such as that of Bempah, cannot be from God. Wengham advised:

He (Apostle Bempah) is not the only prophet in the country. We all pray for the nation and we have not seen or sensed anything like that, so I want to tell Ghanaians on authority that it is a false prophecy and they should disregard it, whether they are (members) of the NDC or NPP, because the President belongs to the whole nation⁵⁷⁵

Agyin-Asare's and Wengham's dismissal of Bempah's prophecy is significant for three reasons. First, it demonstrates how Charismatic and Classical Pentecostal pastors see themselves as powerful ministries who have the mandate to speak on national issues instead of others. They also see themselves as capable of overturning a prophecy from a source that is sanctioned by them.

Nonetheless, Agyin-Asare's counter prophecy and the undeniable claim of Bempah that President Mahama sent envoys to seek his intervention shows that 'divine predictions' are held to be very powerful, conveying direct spiritual power and not merely mediating a message to political actors. Bempah has for instance noted that following his prediction of the death of Mahama, three different groups were sent by the latter to intercede on his behalf. According to him, he acceded to their request and negotiated in an encounter with God. This resulted in a reverse of the death forecast and God's granting of 15 more years for Mahama.⁵⁷⁶ Hence, 'divine predictions' influence political decision making, and political actors do take these prophecies seriously and act on them.

Second, the reaction of prominent Pentecostal pastors to Bempah's prophecy was a clear case of a power clash going on between the prophets of NPMs and pastors of the Classical and Charismatic Ministries. Consider a further reaction from Duncan-Williams which drums home our claim that there is an ongoing contestation among Pentecostal pastors over political prophecies:

The thing that you must always look out for when you see all these prophets prophesying all kinds of doom on the internet (publishing) against the President... is to ask yourself, does (the Prophet) have honour, credibility, character and integrity? Where did he come from? Who trained him? How long has he been on the scene? Who laid hands on him? Whose product is he? At whose feet did he study? Who groomed him? Who covered him? Who was his teacher? Who

⁵⁷⁴ "President John Mahama's Death Prophecy," Interview, *Eye Witness News* (Accra: Citi Fm, February 13, 2013), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5pMi9vvurHw>.

⁵⁷⁵ "Mahama Death Prophecy."

⁵⁷⁶ The Independent Newspaper, "Mahama Has 15 More Years to Die – Rev. Owusu Bempah, *The Independent*, General News, July 30, 2013. <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/Mahama-has-15-more-years-to-die-Rev-Owusu-Bempah-280957>.

Agra and Gbordze also confirms same in separate interviews with this author in the case of Mills who had a team of prophets who intercede on his behalf and provided him with messages from God which were key in his running for the presidency and even when he became president.

taught him? You must be honourable first to qualify to make whatever you say that comes to pass legitimate... it is not just about prophesying.⁵⁷⁷

Duncan-Williams' comments and those of the others cited above disqualify Bempah as not having a mandate to declare such prophetic words, even if he had indeed received such a prophecy and that the manifestation of an earlier prophecy is not a sure proof of prophetic legitimacy but the character of the prophet and who trained him or her are key considerations. In essence, leading Pentecostal pastors see Bempah as overstepping his boundaries of authority to declare the impending death of a president because he is not part of the inner circles of pastors who have assumed national prominence to speak to such issues. Consider Agyin Asare's counter-prophecy to Bempah's forecasting of the death of President Mahama:

I declare that by the authority vested in me as a prophet and an Apostle to the nations and also as one of the spiritual watchmen at the gates of Ghana and by the authority of heaven behind him, the President will not die a premature death before his time, but he will live to declare the works of God.⁵⁷⁸

Here Agyin Asare seeks to nullify Bempah's prophecy, because the former regards himself as more powerful than the latter. Hence, while the actual conflict seems to have been occasioned by Bempah's prophecy and the counter prophecy from Agyin Asare, the underlining factor is the 'strand-struggle' among the leadership of these strands of PMs with CMs pastors regarding themselves as 'superior pastors' and those with a mandate to authenticate a message purported to have been received from God. Consequently, the nature and the form that prophetic politics has taken during Ghana's Fourth Republican era, where political prophecies are contested, contradicted and countered should be seen as part of internal rivalry among PMs that has spilled into the public arena.

Thirdly, the contest over uttered prophecies undermines the influence of PMs in specifically mediating spiritual matters, but generally over their leverage in negotiating other political issues. The contest over prophecies leads to contradictions over the potency of prophecies as pastors try to distinguish between valid and invalid prophecies. For example, in one breath, Agyin-Asare and Wengham concluded that Bempah's prophecy was a false one. Yet, in another breath it is credited, with a counter prophecy. This is a contradiction. If a prophecy is false, then the talk of the best way of handling that said false prophecy does not even arise because there was no authentic prophecy in the first place. In other words, the dismissal of a prophecy as not being credible raises the question as to the necessity for a counter prophecy if the said prophecy is deemed as questionable/false. This confusion over an uttered

⁵⁷⁷ Agyei-Twum, "John Mahama Will Die this Year Unless."

⁵⁷⁸ Radio Xyz Online, "Agyin Asare Rescues Mahama."

prophecy raises doubts about the credibility of pastors engaged in the contest and their capacity and genuineness` in mediating other forms of engagements.

5.4.0 Religious and Political Implications

This implication section of the chapter seeks to offer an interpretation of what is occurring in this form of political prophecies by elaborating the religious and political dynamics which is presented by this new form of Pentecostal political engagement. Undoubtedly the introduction of ‘divine predictions’ have resulted in shifts in the political relations with Pentecostal leaders. In this shift prophets are instead courting politicians, and politicians are responding to prophetic support in contrast to the pre-Fourth Republican era where political actors instead wooed them. For instance, candidate Nana Addo, who previously related more with HMC leaders for the first time, visited Bempah’s church in May 2017. Nana Addo’s visit to the church was to receive what Bempah described as the ‘Horn of Unicorn,’ which he described as a symbol of God’s authority and the source of strength for the former’s presidency.⁵⁷⁹ This was after the latter’s prophecy that Nana Addo was going to win the 2016 presidential elections led to the party inviting Bempah to lead party members in a series of spiritual programmes during the electioneering campaign in an election that Nana Addo won. In a similar instance, President Mills visited the Synagogue Church of all Nations led by Prophet T.B. Joshua after his election victory in 2008 and publicly revealed that the Prophet had predicted he will win that election. Hence as the new forms of religious legitimacy emerge, political actors are likely to either shift camp or access this alternative source of political legitimacy to win or maintain political power.

‘Divine prediction’ has also become a proactive means of checking and validating political decisions. In this regard, ‘divine predictions’ has assumed the form of a ‘communique–’one mediated through the divine pronouncement of an individual (on behalf of God), such as that of Agbozo and Bempah. This is different from that channelled through institutions like the HMCs and other umbrella Pentecostal groupings that presumably speaks more intentionally from the perspective of human actors. The HMCs communiques which CPMs and the CMs have also adopted usually speaks on actual political actions and not intended actions as ‘divine prediction’ normally does. Through such proactive means NPMs pastors claim they are able to identify impending national calamities and offer direction to curb such occurrences.⁵⁸⁰

⁵⁷⁹ See, Ghana Web TV, “Owusu Bempah Presents ‘Horn of Strength’ to Akufo-Addo,” 19 March 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=en8Z6-85z8I&list=WL&index=68>

⁵⁸⁰ Interview with John Yaw Adu, February 5, 2015.

Divine forecasting of electoral outcomes has also become part of the toolkit of political suasion. In these instances, NPMs pastors, who have assumed the position of ‘king makers,’ secure and validate the legitimacy of political actors in the public eye. The declaration of political prophecies works to the advantage of politicians in whose favour these predictions are made, since these enhance their electoral fortunes – not only in the eyes of Pentecostal voters, but also arguably non-Pentecostals, since the whole Ghanaian public sphere has been ‘pentecostalised.’⁵⁸¹

Despite the novelty that attends ‘divine predictions,’ the contradictions, contest, and conflicts that it creates have negative consequences for the credibility of Pentecostal spirituality and political stability in Ghana. In the first place, the public spats over ‘divine predictions—which reflects the broader struggle for dominance within Ghanaian Pentecostalism risk eroding the influences and credibility of Pentecostal pastors as neutral mediators of political disputes. As demonstrated above, ‘death predictions,’ by Neo-Prophetic pastors usually sparks reactions from leaders of established PMs who usually seek to either discredit the prophecy and the prophet who made the declaration. This raises the question as to the authenticity of these prophecies and raises credibility issues of the Pentecostal personalities and whether they are not making these interventions for political considerations. This creates mistrust in the minds of the public who now begin to ascribe political connections. This invariably rules them out as neutral mediators over any political disputes and conflicts.⁵⁸² Charles Agyin-Asare open criticism of Bempeh’s prophecy and the subsequent exchanges among them, means that they both cannot be regarded as independent arbiters in any political dispute resolution—an area where PMs have had some successes during the Fourth Republic.

Additionally, the contests over prophecies and the public conduct of some Neo-Prophetic pastors’ links them to the major political parties. This is evident in the one sided prophecies of someone like Bempeh who have usually predicted variety for the NPP and the open support and defence of the NPP governments initiatives since they won power in 2016.⁵⁸³ Similarly Kobi can also be said to be biased towards the NDC, after he challenged the NPP electoral victory of 2016,⁵⁸⁴ having predicted the NPP will lose that election. Since the NPP

⁵⁸¹ Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, “Missionaries without Robes: Lay Charismatic Fellowships and the Evangelization of Ghana,” *The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 19, no. 2 (1997): 167.

⁵⁸² Sackey, “Election Prophecies,” 57.

⁵⁸³ See Marian Ansah, “God Will Give Nana Addo Wisdom to Govern Ghana—Owusu Bempah,” December 18, 2016, <http://citifmonline.com/2016/12/18/god-will-give-nana-addo-wisdom-to-govern-ghana-owusu-bempah/>.

⁵⁸⁴ Ghana Tube, “NPP Never Won the 2016 Elections Fairly-Prophet Badu Kobi,” July 10, 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HBryKvyk94Q>.

assumed office in 2016 Kobi has emerged as major critic of the government.⁵⁸⁵ This clearly shows the leaning of these Pastors and raises a fundamental questions as to whether their predictions were indeed genuine or one cooked up to sway the Ghanaian electorates who belief in spiritual causality.

Again, the unsubstantiated allegations about incumbents rigging elections with the help of state agencies under the guise of prophecy stalls national progress and erodes confidence in public institutions, especially the Electoral Commission—that has already suffered some credibility issues in the past.⁵⁸⁶ Such mistrust can be the basis for political parties that have genuinely lost elections challenging the result on the basis of a prophecy. In 2013 it took the court eight months to affirm the winner of the 2012 elections for a petition. This period stalled national progress and affected investor confidence since they were not sure of which governments they were going to deal with and whether the opposition party will accept the verdict of the court.⁵⁸⁷ Hence, similar challenging of declaration of election results, based on a prophecy that predicted that a party will win, will hinder national development as these issues are challenged in court.

Ultimately, ‘divine predictions’ has the tendency to create pre and post-election conflict, irrespective of the genuineness of a prophecy.⁵⁸⁸ Prophetic accusation of election rigging led to unnecessary interventions by political parties to protect the electoral process. Such interventions usually led to clashes between political parties on the one hand and political parties and security services on the other. This author has elsewhere noted the conflicts that ensued during the limited voter registration exercise in 2008 as the mistrust among the parties resulted in conflicts that led to the death of people and the loss of properties.⁵⁸⁹ Thus as Samuel Sackey summarily notes “In a highly religious context where the belief in the supernatural remain very intense ... it is possible for politicians to reject the outcome of elections that go contrary to the declarations of their prophets while relying on popular support and religious

⁵⁸⁵ See Megaghnews, “Ghana’s Economy will be worse in 2018 Under Akufo Addo-Prophet Badu Kobi prophesies,” December, 18 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=06xiv-MyhoY>; Peacefmonline.com, “NPP Deceived Ghanaians for Power,” July 22, 2017, <http://www.peacefmonline.com/pages/politics/politics/201707/321460.php?storyid=100&>.

⁵⁸⁶ The 2012 election petition heard by the Supreme Court of Ghana revealed serious flaws in the electoral system in Ghana. See Supreme Court of Ghana, *Judgement: Presidential Election Petition*, (Accra: Supreme Court of Ghana, 2013), 48.

⁵⁸⁷ Kwesi Aning, “Full Presentation on Doomsday Prophecies in Ghana,” Ghanaweb TV, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FWzwqIIQTuU>, 21 February, 2018.

⁵⁸⁸ Sackey, “Election Prophecies,” 56.

⁵⁸⁹ Fredrick Acheampong, “Christian Themes as Campaign Issues.”

justification.”⁵⁹⁰ Indeed there is evidence from elections in Ivory Coast in the 2000s⁵⁹¹ and Kenya in 2007 and 2013⁵⁹² which showed how Pentecostal endorsed and predictive prophecies can under mind the electoral process and lead to conflicts.⁵⁹³ These episodes for all intends and purpose raises security concern which as a renowned security expert Prof. Kwesi Aning has noted may be difficult to resolve because “those who seek to protect us (political actors) seek protection from this spectrum (prophets)”⁵⁹⁴ as demonstrated above and may have difficulty dealing with the actual or real threats that these utterances creates.

5.5.0 Conclusion

This chapter has established the transitions in the Pentecostal spiritual responses to the socio-political challenges in Ghana and shown how the pervasiveness of ‘divine predictions’ is linked to such changes that began in the 1990s. Through the case study of political prophecies, the chapter has also shown that ‘divine predictions’ is a distinctive and or an alternative form of engagement, which represents a shift from the pre-Fourth Republican era of political co-optation to an era that is witnessing prophetic influence in political circles. Accordingly, political prophecies in their predictive form which for the most part of Ghana’s political history were not formerly implicit or manifested in the public arena, have in recent times gained political attention and has become a feature of Fourth Republican politics in Ghana.

In the ensuing struggle for political influence, NPMs pastors have been successful in renegotiating the power base within Pentecostal Christianity in Ghana by asserting themselves as alternatives, if not better alternatives to the older Pentecostal churches. In the process, they have cause a redefinition and in practical terms a redistribution of religious authority in political circles as they contest the assumed authority of the older Pentecostal ministries. While the older Pentecostal leaders wants the status quo maintained, the NPMs pastors are resolved to redefine these boundaries of power by claiming that prophecy is their exclusive zone, even if this has been assumed in the past by others when they were not actively engaged in politics. In the light of this, the chapter concludes that NPMs pastors are, through ‘divine predictions,’ challenging existing power hierarchies within the Pentecostal sphere as they led the shift to establish a

⁵⁹⁰ Sackey, “Election Prophecies,” 56.

⁵⁹¹ J. Vüllers, ‘Fighting for a Kingdom of God? The Role of Religion in the Ivorian Crisis’0028 A working paper of the German Institute of Global and Area Studies, 2011.

⁵⁹² G. Deacon, “Driving the Devil Out: Kenya Born Again Elections” *Journal of Religion in Africa*, 45, (2015):200–220.

⁵⁹³ Sackey, “Election Prophecies,” 58.

⁵⁹⁴ Aning, “Doomsday Prophecies in Ghana.”

distinctive form of political engagement within the larger context of religious interface with politics in Ghana.

Nonetheless, 'divine prediction' also raises credibility issues that is affecting the leverage of Pentecostal leaders as respectable and trust worthy mediators during national crisis. Again, their 'divine predictions' has the potential to erode the trust in public institutions as they impinge unproven allegations against state institutions under the guise of divine revelations. Although none of the threats posed by divine predictions have manifested, it important that state actors who analyse security issues take into consideration the potential threat presented by this Pentecostal form of engagements.

Having established the emergence of a novel mode of Pentecostal engagement with politics that has altered the religious leverage in political circles and created alternative avenues for religious association with political actors; the next chapter explores the diverse emergent theologies that is shaping Pentecostal modes of engagement with politics in Ghana.

CHAPTER 6: PENTECOSTAL POLITICAL THEOLOGY

Pentecostalism is divided organisationally, socially, theologically ... and therefore also politically. In addition, the Pentecostalism of the countries of the global south is generally a faith “of the people.” It possesses neither long cultural and educational traditions, nor a heritage of political participation and of theological reflection on politics, still less a history of intimate collaboration with state power (Paul Freston, March 2014).

6.0.0 Introduction

Paul Freston’s assertions above concerning fragmentation and the lack of a tradition of political theologies within Pentecostalism are largely correct.⁵⁹⁵ Nevertheless, in the last three decades, there have been changes.⁵⁹⁶ Writing in 2010, Amos Yong argued that in the Global South, there is a distinctive Pentecostal theology that can be discerned out of Pentecostal piety, spirituality and religious experiences to construct a political theological vision of Pentecostalism.⁵⁹⁷ In his work of constructive theology, Yong identified a variety of Pentecostal theologies which he cast as providing alternatives to the politics suggested by secular institutions.⁵⁹⁸ A similar case has been made in the case of Africa by Andreas Heuser who notes that these theologies are reflected in national public discourses, such that a political theology of African Pentecostalism can be identified.⁵⁹⁹ At the national level, the direct engagement of Ghanaian PMs with politics over the last three decades makes it possible for scholars to determine a Pentecostal political theology of engagement.⁶⁰⁰ Nevertheless, there has been little constructive political theology⁶⁰¹ mainly because PMs rarely attempt an explicit articulation of their political theologies.⁶⁰² Taking Yong and Heuser’s argument as a point of departure, this chapter seeks to provide an account of the underlying theology that guides the Pentecostal political practices that have been

⁵⁹⁵ Paul Freston, “Pentecostalism and Global Politics: Three Questionable Approaches” (Key Issues in Religion and World Affairs, Laurier University, Canada, March 3, 2014), 1.

⁵⁹⁶ See for instance Eric Patterson, “First Steps toward a Pentecostal Political Theology” In Néstor Medina and Sammy Alfaro (eds) *Pentecostal Ministries and Charismatics in Latin America and Latino Communities* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 211-226; Amos Yong and Samuel Zalanga, “What Empire, Which Multitude? Pentecostalism and Social Liberation in North America and Sub-Saharan Africa,” in Bruce Ellis Benson and Peter Goodwin Heltzel, eds., *Evangelicals and Empire: Christian Alternatives to the Political Status Quo* (Grand Rapids: Brazos 2008), Bruce Ellis Benson and Peter Goodwin Heltzel, *Evangelicals and Empire: Christian Alternatives to the Political Status Quo* (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2008), Ruth Marshall, “The Sovereignty of Miracles: Pentecostal Political Theology in Nigeria,” *Constellations* 17, no. 2 (2010): 197–223; Ogbu U. Kalu, “Faith and Politics in Africa: Emergent Political Theology of Engagement in Nigeria” (Paul B. Henry Lecture, Paul Henry Institute, Calvin College, 2003); Yong, *In the Days of Caesar*.

⁵⁹⁷ Yong, *In the Days of Caesar*, 109-117.

⁵⁹⁸ Yong, *In the Days of Caesar*, 112.

⁵⁹⁹ Heuser, “A Political Theology for an African Pentecostalism?,” 303.

⁶⁰⁰ Lindhardt, “Introduction: Presence and Impact,” 32.

⁶⁰¹ For exceptions, see Joseph Quayesi-Amakye, *Christology and Evil in Ghana*.; Joseph Quayesi-Amakye, “Pentecostals and State Relations in Ghana,” 640–57.

⁶⁰² Eric Patterson, “First Steps toward a Pentecostal Political Theology,” in *Pentecostals and Charismatics in Latin America and Latino Communities*, ed. Néstor Medina and Sammy Alfaro (New York: Palgrave Macmillan US, 2015), 214.

analysed above—theology that is evident not only in the words of protagonists, but in the practices themselves.

Political theology is both theology and political ‘ideology’ aiming to use theology to engage with the wider world and develop an interpretation of the world (in this case, political arrangements and processes). Political theology is thus a hermeneutics explaining the political world and seeking, at least in part, salvation by means of political action. Theological explorations of Pentecostal engagement with politics in Ghana are essential for our purpose because they offer a deeper understanding of the ‘political engagements’ and open up new ways of understanding and explaining underlying motivations, mobilisations and changing positions, both in response to political developments and in initiating Pentecostal political agendas. Thus they are the starting point to interrogating the understanding that guides Pentecostal practice.

Historically, PMs in Ghana did not and could not freely express their understanding of politics, both for ‘religious’ reasons and on account of the political milieu within which they emerged. Generally, in the decades after independence, most PMs in Africa focused on evangelism and the planting of churches. This emphasis reflected a desire to build and grow, but was also consistent with worldwide beliefs among PMs about the second coming of Christ.⁶⁰³ Thus, during this period, they “maintained a dualistic vision of politics as a ‘worldly’ matter in which believers should not be involved.”⁶⁰⁴

Politically, most Ghanaian PMs were started during periods of colonial domination and military dictatorship, which began in 1966 with the overthrow of Nkrumah. These periods were characterised by military repression and authoritarian rule. As noted in the introduction above and in chapter one, in such a dictatorial context, most PMs behaved pragmatically by cooperating with authoritarian regimes. Indeed, it was difficult in these circumstances to express their political stance, if any, for fear of brutal retaliation that might arise out of any conflict with the military regime. In the years that Ghana has returned to democratic rule and PMs burgeoned, restrictions on free expression of opinion have waned. PMs have begun to express a variety of theologies which depart from or modify earlier positions.⁶⁰⁵

In some other African countries, such as Nigeria, the emergent Pentecostal theologies of this period were self-consciously constructed in response to Islam, which has exercised a powerful presence in the political sphere constituting the ruling elites usually through military

⁶⁰³ Larbi, *Pentecostalism in Ghana*, 175–183.

⁶⁰⁴ Lindhardt, “Introduction: Presence and Impact,” 28.

⁶⁰⁵ Quayesi-Amakye, “Pentecostals and State Relations,” 642–46, 655–67.

dictatorship.⁶⁰⁶ In Ghana, the upsurge of Pentecostalism occurred in a stable democratic context in which Christianity—the HMCs and increasingly the PMs—have been predominant.

This chapter examines the political theologies of PMs with particular reference to CPMs and CMs exploring their distinctive features as well as areas of commonality. In the case of CPMs, the chapter focuses on the CoP, recognising that it is a very large Church and that other ministries in the CPM stream share a common tradition and similar understandings of the political sphere. Hence the political theology of the CoP is taken to be broadly representative of the CPMs. However, the two major CMs in Ghana, ACI and ICGC, profess different understanding of political issues and are thus discussed separately. Although the political theologies of the CM leaders, Otabil and Duncan-Williams are emphasised in this analysis, their understandings provide powerful insights into their ministries. Unlike the CPMs, which have moved into establishments (institutionalised), most CMs are first generational churches, still tied to the personality of their founders.⁶⁰⁷ Thus, it has rightly been argued: “the founders’ views represent their establishment.”⁶⁰⁸

6.1.0 Classical Pentecostal Churches: The Church of Pentecost

It is widely acknowledged that most early CPMs did not prioritise a theology that addressed socio-political issues due to their strong belief in the imminent return of Jesus Christ. This belief led to a focus on evangelism and ‘things above’ (otherworldly concerns).⁶⁰⁹ In the case of the CoP, the focus on winning souls is captured in the framework of God’s Covenant with the Church, which “serves as the philosophical underpinning of the approaches and operations of the church.”⁶¹⁰ The ‘Covenant’ essentially instructs the church to focus on evangelism. Indeed, James McKeown (founder of CoP) is quoted as saying that the HMCs were focusing their energies in establishing schools and hospitals while the people were perishing.⁶¹¹

The CoP has not disavowed the saving of souls for eternity, but its singular emphasis on this idea has changed over time. This represents a shift for a strand of Pentecostalism that

⁶⁰⁶ Richard Burgess, *Nigeria’s Christian Revolution: The Civil War Revival and Its Pentecostal Progeny (1967-2006)* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013). See also Afe Adogame, “Politicization of Religion and Religionization of Politics in Nigeria,” in *Religion, History, and Politics in Nigeria*, ed. Chima J. Korie and G. Ugo Nwokeji (Oxford: University Press of America, 2006), 128–39.

⁶⁰⁷ Gifford, “Ghana’s Charismatic Churches,” 256-7.

⁶⁰⁸ Interview with Michael Nii Osah Tettey, April 20, 2015.

⁶⁰⁹ See Andreas Heuser, “Encoding Caesar’s Realm – Variants of Spiritual Warfare Politics in Africa,” in *Pentecostalism in Africa: Presence and Impact of Pneumatic Christianity in Postcolonial Societies*, ed. Martin Lindhardt (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 274.

⁶¹⁰ Kumi-Larbi, “Church of Pentecost.”

⁶¹¹ See Debrunner, *Christianity in Ghana*, 75.

did not previously encourage direct partisan politics by its members. Changes of emphasis within the CoP also represent a “theological shift from the doctrine of holiness to a discourse promoting material well-being in the here and now,”⁶¹² albeit different from that of the CMs. For the CoP, this interest is born out of its present admission that “the church exists within a nation (and must therefore) also take a keen interest in what happens within it, even as it continues with its soul winning agenda.”⁶¹³

Beginning with the leadership of Apostle Dr Michael Kwabena Ntumi (Former President of the GPCC and Chairman of the COP-1998-2008) and consolidated by Apostle Prof. Onyinah (current President of the GPCC and Chairman of the COP), the CoP has been preaching a political theology. As noted in chapter 3, Quayesi-Amakye, a commentator on Pentecostalism in Ghana, describes this theology as a revolutionary social gospel, which challenges Christians to prioritise issues of the state by seeing these as part of their God-given mandate.⁶¹⁴ Members are encouraged to actively participate in politics, including by seeking and accepting political appointments. For the CoP, the key task for Christians as they enter politics is to make biblical tasks contemporaneous.⁶¹⁵ This, Onyinah argues, can be achieved through a transformative reading of the Bible to include both personal and societal prosperity.⁶¹⁶ The CoP interprets this new approach as the church returning to God’s original mandate to humankind to take dominion as stewards on earth (Genesis 1:26-28).⁶¹⁷

In addition to the ‘dominion’ mandate, CoP leaders also appeal regularly to Matthew 5:13-16, where Jesus speaks of his disciples as the ‘salt and light of the world.’ Appealing to this text, the CoP emphasises that Christians are the moral preservative and ethical conscience of the society.⁶¹⁸ For example, Samuel Antwi, an Apostle of the CoP and former General Secretary of the GPCC notes:

The Bible tells us that we are the salt and light of the world. That has been our guiding principal whereby we realise that if we Christians, we are the salt and light of the earth then how can we make our influence be felt so that vices such as corruption, human rights, etc. would be eradicated since light shines in darkness. We then began to realise that we need to make our influence felt

⁶¹² Andreas Heuser, “Encoding Caesar’s Realm – Variants of Spiritual Warfare Politics in Africa,” in *Pentecostalism in Africa: Presence and Impact of Pneumatic Christianity in Postcolonial Societies*, ed. Martin Lindhardt (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 273.

⁶¹³ See The Church Of Pentecost, “Five-Year Vision for the Church Of Pentecost (2008-2013)” (General Council of the Church of Pentecost, 2009), 3, 10, 20.

⁶¹⁴ Quayesi-Amakye, “Pentecostals and State Relations,” 644.

⁶¹⁵ Quayesi-Amakye, “Pentecostals and State Relations,” 644.

⁶¹⁶ Quayesi-Amakye, “Pentecostals and State Relations,” 644.

⁶¹⁷ Samuel Antwi, “The Church as a Steward of the Nations” (Church of Pentecost Conference, Accra, November 14, 2014).

⁶¹⁸ Interview with Onyinah, . See also Ghana Pentecostal Council, “The Church Response to the Current Debate on the Quest for a Suitable Political System for the Republic of Ghana” (Ghana Pentecostal Council, n.d.).

and as a Council (GPCC), if people's human rights are trampled on, it is against the scriptures then we (Christians) become the light of the world by speaking in such situations.⁶¹⁹

In pursuance of this mandate, the CoP encourages its members to take an active role in politics in order to 'cleanse and purge' the present political system, which Alfred Koduah (Former General Secretary of the CoP) claims needs 'desilting.'⁶²⁰ This can be achieved by using their embodiment as the 'light' to expose the rot in society and bring relief to the poor. As 'salt,' they are to preserve the integrity of the institutions that they are appointed to and conserve and preserve the country against putrefaction.⁶²¹

In an exposition on the 2017 theme for the CoP: "I am an example of Christ in my generation" (1 Corinthians 4:16-17), Onyinah used the lives of Jesus and Paul as exemplary models for members to follow, in both private and public life. Noting the negative public perception of politicians, Onyinah argued that Christian politicians could effect change by emulating these biblical characters:

Politicians are considered as liars and people who make false promises. The Christian politician must live to bring a difference. He should be able to live a Christ-like character to challenge his colleagues to follow suit. He should be able to refuse bribe and portray Christ in politics. He should live as an example of Christ in politics.⁶²²

In relating this to corruption, considered a major problem in the Ghanaian and Africa societies as a whole, he noted:

One of the challenging issues in modern world is bribery and corruption. Corruption is found throughout the world. It becomes difficult when you live in a country where government officials are very corrupt It is then alleged that you cannot do business without corruption...The Bible clearly condemns corruption (Exodus 18:21; 23:8; Leviticus 19:15; Deuteronomy 10:17; Ecclesiastes 7:7; Micah 3:11). How can you do business or work without taking bribe? The bare fact is that if corruption was wrong 2000 years ago, can it be right now? ...The world is looking for examples. In Acts 24:26, Felix wanted Paul to give him bribe so that he would release him from prison, but he did not. He was suffering in prison. His imprisonment could mean death, but he didn't. You and I must live as an example of Christ for people to imitate. The nations, governments, institutions and churches are looking for people of integrity.⁶²³

These quotations from Onyinah's exposition demonstrate how the CoP has shifted from its prior belief that the whole world is doomed and cannot be salvaged by any man, only by God. They now accept a greater role for human agency, and therefore focus on Bible characters as examples to admonish those in authority to change their ways. At the same time, the church

⁶¹⁹ Interview with Samuel Antwi, January 22, 2015. Samuel Antwi, January 22, 2015..

⁶²⁰ Alfred Koduah, *Who is disturbing the Nation?* (Accra: Advocate Publishing Limited, 2008), 93-106.

⁶²¹ Quayesi-Amakye, *Christology and Evil*, 49:184.

⁶²² Opoku Onyinah, "I Am an Example of Christ in My Generation," Theme for the Year, 2017, <http://thecophq.org/overview.php?id=3&&THEME+FOR+THE+YEAR>.

⁶²³ Onyinah, "I Am an Example of Christ."

encourages members that examples in the Bible can guide them in their own political engagements, helping them to avoid the bad deeds of the present crop of political actors.⁶²⁴

The CoP considers that “the Church (Christianity) is the only hope of the world for a transformed society.”⁶²⁵ To ensure this transformation, the Church as the body of Christ must be focused on “producing a ‘new person’ who is the image of Christ.”⁶²⁶ Onyinah has explained:

As Christians, we educate our people to get involved with whatever will promote the gospel of the Lord and I think the Lord will want Christians to be salt of the world because we believe that if we have good Christians they should be able to influence politics positively as the light and salt of the world and transform the political culture. Many people say politics is a dirty game, so we want it to be a clean game and it is only Christians who can make it so.⁶²⁷

In essence the Church does not see its mandate to seek the peace of the nation as coming only through quietest means alone, for example by prayer (Jeremiah 29:7; Daniel 2:48-49; Ezekiel 22:30; Romans 8:1-3; 1 Timothy 2:1-4). Rather, it believes that the church should form members who are spirit-filled and imbibed with the character traits of Christ and the others in the early church, and encourage them to stand for political office. Onyinah asserts:

The Holy Spirit works in the heart of Christians; transforming them into the image of Christ so as you are being transformed, all your actions should emanate from that transformation. So speaking into national issues, all our actions are led by the Holy Spirit so as we are thinking of coming out on a national issue, we are already led by the Holy Spirit. Because the Bible says that it is he who causes us to think and to act so that is how we relate to the Holy Spirit in national issues.⁶²⁸

As a practical step the CoP has been advocating collaboration between the Christian churches and the state in political appointments to ensure that spirit-filled Christians are appointed. Koduah, suggested:

For example, the critical areas of the economy, you want somebody who is very faithful to be in charge of Ghana Revenue Authority, so that your (state) money will be safe. So, you can come (with) your criteria.... So, the church sits down to get you people we think are matured, faithful, spirit filled and of course qualified. And then we recommend them.... Once that is done ... you (the appointee) are first accountable to your God, accountable to us (CoP) and accountable to your government. So, you have these checks and balance on you. If at any given point the government sees that you are not doing the work well, the church has to come in and withdraw you.⁶²⁹

To lead by example in this new political theology of engagement, a number of Pentecostal leaders within the CPMs have accepted political appointments during the Fourth Republic. For

⁶²⁴ Interview with Ghartey.

⁶²⁵ Antwi, “The Church as a Steward of the Nations.”

⁶²⁶ Antwi, “The Church as a Steward of the Nations.”

⁶²⁷ Interview with Onyinah.

⁶²⁸ Interview with Onyinah.

⁶²⁹ Interview with Koduah.

instance, the Prophet Martinson Yeboah (former Chairman of the CoP) and Rev. S. Asore, Former General Superintendent of the AoG-G and former President of the GPCC, were appointed as members of the Council of State in President Rawlings's government (1993-2001). More recently, Rev. Stephen Wengam (Director of Administration of AoG-G/Lead Pastor of the Cedar Mountain AoG-G, East Legon) and the Rt. Rev. Dr Paul Frimpong-Manso (current Superintendent of the AoG-G) have been appointed to chair the Sixth Prisons Council and the National Commission on Small Arms and Light Weapons respectively.

Yet, the shift to engage directly in the affairs of the state has also led to a rethinking of the old theology of the CoP that avoided open confrontation with political actors. This older theology was premised on the biblical injunction (Romans 13:1-14) that all governments are established by God; because they derive their power from God, they must be supported to bring prosperity to mankind.⁶³⁰ Having adapted to democracy, PMs are now more focused on sustaining the democratic system. The 2013-2018 Vision of the CoP states in part: "without good governance and a harmonious political atmosphere in a nation, the church will not have peace to worship and serve God's purpose, (therefore the church must) play its prophetic role effectively in order for peace and tranquillity to reign in the nation."⁶³¹ What this means is that in the present circumstances, PMs oppose authoritarian rule, preferring instead democracy. Additionally, they, like other Christian groups, accept the idea that they must partner or complement governments' efforts.

However, it is important to recognise that the CoP's political engagements are not intended to displace evangelism. Rather, they are often treated avenues for evangelism. The CoP has not abandoned its eschatological roots while it strives to meet the existential needs of its members and of society. For instance, its 2013-2018 Vision on Social Services and Welfare notes in part: "the primary concern of the church is to represent Christ, who meets the spiritual, material and social needs of the people. Consequently, the Church's services to society in the areas of education and health will be given special attention. These demonstrations of God's love to society will also be used as a platform for evangelism." This is re-enforced under the church's vision for evangelism, discipleship and church growth:

Efforts will be made at all levels and through all possible avenues, to preach the gospel in our communities as well as unreached areas. All special meetings such as funerals, weddings, farewells, and naming ceremonies will have soul-winning activities ingrained. Social services, such as the operations of the University College, Senior High Schools and Junior High Schools,

⁶³⁰ Robert K. Kraynak, *Christian Faith and Modern Democracy: God and Politics in the Fallen World* (Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2001), 2. See also Larbi, *Pentecostalism in Ghana*, 433 & 440.

⁶³¹ The Church of Pentecost, "Vision 2018," 73.

will be evangelism-oriented. All special services as well as social services will be evangelism-oriented.⁶³²

In a nutshell, the CoP has shifted in its interpretation of the political terrain. The church now encourages the direct participation of its members in politics and is ready to partner the state. This new proposal is based on a theological understanding that Christians, as stewards of God's creation, must be engaged in temporal efforts to bring relief to the poor and vulnerable in society. This service to mankind must be understood in the context of servant-leadership as prescribed by Christ (Luke 15:11-32) where their dominion entails serving mankind because it is in their power to do so as leaders. Onyinah has, for instance noted: "As the Lord gives us the resources to serve the communities, and through that, we portray what God would want us to do so in our schools, hospitals. We expect that we will be leaving examples of how God would like us to rule his people on earth."⁶³³

This is not necessarily an acceptance of democratic principles but a renegotiation of them. In part the CoP's theology equates with the democratic principle of leaders discharging their duties in service to the people. It departs, however, on matters of ultimate loyalty and accountability. Consider a quote in the CoP's vision for its members on politics: "The church will maintain its political neutrality. Members will be encouraged to accept political appointments to serve in the national interest, provided such appointments are considered by the individuals as God's will and as a calling to divine service."⁶³⁴

Clearly, ultimate accountability is said to be owed to God, with notions of national interest thereby made subject to those of divine service. With this understanding, Pentecostal Christians who enter politics face potential conflicts as they seek to balance their temporal appointments with their supposed mandate as God's vicegerent. This conflict may not arise with issues like corruption and abuse of office, which state and church both ostensibly condemn as destructive of society. Yet Onyinah, Koduah and Antwi have not addressed themselves to specific moral dilemmas that might confront a Pentecostal president. It is not at all clear, therefore, how such claims for the priority of accountability to God would be envisioned to play out in areas where there is less clarity about the alignment of government policy with church teaching.

Another important issue is the inward looking or exclusivist nature of the CoP theology which contends that only Christians can transform the political realms. The CoP believes in

⁶³² The Church of Pentecost, "Vision 2018," 19.

⁶³³ Interview with Onyinah.

⁶³⁴ The Church of Pentecost, "Vision 2018," 73.

social transformation through Christian leadership. While the Ghanaian Democratic system allows for religious representation, there is a danger that the CoP's attitudes and disproportionate representation could lead to the kind of social unrest that ultimately undermines representative democracy.

6.2.0 Charismatic Ministries

Charismatics are regarded as the key instigators of the shift from the classical position that emphasised eschatology and holiness to a dominion theology that “stressed prosperity, empowerment and taking control in the here and now.”⁶³⁵ Nonetheless there are differences among Charismatics on how to achieve these changes.⁶³⁶ In Ghana, Otabil and Duncan-Williams who lead two of the biggest Charismatic ministries, exemplify this diversity, since each theologises the nature and basis for participation in the affairs of state in distinct ways. On the one hand, Otabil emphasises the application of scripture and black consciousness to empower individuals to transform the state. On the other hand, Duncan-Williams suggests individual Christians should engage in intercessory prayer (spiritual warfare) to manifest God's prophetic decrees (1 Timothy 1:18-19, Isaiah 66 and Exodus 1: 8-22) to ‘birth’ His original intention.⁶³⁷ God's original intention, according to Duncan-Williams, was for man (and by extension nations) to live without sickness, diseases, infirmity and poverty.⁶³⁸

6.2.1 Political Theology of Mensa Otabil

Otabil's theology has been variously referred to as Critical Afrocentrism,⁶³⁹ Pentecostal-inspired Pan-Africanist ideology⁶⁴⁰ and Afrocentric Christian theology (Afrocentricity).⁶⁴¹ Like the CPMs, his political theology basically emphasises the importance of individual empowerment to influence, and potentially take over national leadership. For Otabil, transformation of individuals is intimately connected to transformation at the cultural and

⁶³⁵ J.K. Asamoah-Gyadu, “Pentecostalism and the African Christian Landscape,” in *Pentecostalism in Africa: Presence and Impact of Pneumatic Christianity in Postcolonial Societies*, ed. Martin Lindhardt (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 111.

⁶³⁶ See Paul Gifford, “Unity and Diversity within African Pentecostalism: A Comparison of the Christianities of Daniel Olukoya and David Oyedepo,” in *Pentecostalism in Africa: Presence and Impact of Pneumatic Christianity in Postcolonial Societies*, ed. Martin Lindhardt (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 115–35.

⁶³⁷ Nicholas Duncan-Williams, *Birthing the Promises of God in Travail* (Indiana: Bishop House Publications, 1999), 7–9. For a practical prayer guide to enforcing prophetic decrees, see Nicholas Duncan-Williams, *Enforcing Prophetic Decrees* (Middletown: Prayer Submit Publishing, 2016).

⁶³⁸ Nicholas Duncan-Williams, *Praying through the Promises of God* (Florida: Xulon Press, 2012), vii–ix.

⁶³⁹ David Tonghou Ngong, “The Material in Salvific Discourse: A Study of Two Christian Perspectives” (Baylor University, 2007), 81.

⁶⁴⁰ van Dijk, “Beyond the Rivers of Ethiopia,” 165.

⁶⁴¹ van Gorder, “Beyond the Rivers of Africa,” 33–54.

political levels.⁶⁴² However, his method for achieving this differs from those suggested by the CPMs. Otabil proposes a change in mentality and the instilling of ‘black pride’ as a necessary preliminary step. This involves ‘breaking’ what he calls mental slavery: “The most difficult part to break in any situation of addiction and dependency is not the physical but the mental, so then mental slavery is more difficult to break than physical slavery.”⁶⁴³

Rijk van Dijk has described Otabil’s theology as a “triangulation of black pride/Afrocentrism, Pentecostal liberation ideology and a prosperity gospel based on private entrepreneurship.”⁶⁴⁴ It is a systematised theology tailored for Africa and the African diaspora; unlike that of the CPMs and other CMs, it is not presented as having universal application. The following analysis of Otabil’s political theology draws upon a range of his publications and sermons, and in particular three key texts: *Beyond the Rivers of Ethiopia: A Biblical Revelation on God’s Purpose for the Black Race*; *Four Laws of Productivity: God’s Foundation for Living*; and *Buy the Future: Learning to Negotiate for a Future Better than your Present*.

Though most liberation theologians deem ideologies as secondary and rather prioritise “structures of power and class,”⁶⁴⁵ Otabil’s political theology is primarily ideological. It focuses on liberating the individual rather than always confronting political actors, and also aims to instil a ‘black consciousness.’ Rijk van Dijk has described this theology as the “foundation of a Pentecostal Liberation Theology that proclaims a Christianised sequel to Pan-Africanism.”⁶⁴⁶ This theology is aimed at liberating the mind of the African that is hooked on the supply and superiority of the white skin (that is, from mental slavery); despite the fact that Africans are politically independent, they are still held in the ‘bondage of freedom.’⁶⁴⁷

For Otabil, the Ghanaian problem is a subset of the larger African problem. He does not accept that the challenges in Africa are spiritual or limited to foreign invasions such as colonisation and neo-colonisation. Rather, he sees them as a mixed bag, deriving from aspects

⁶⁴² Marleen De Witte, “Buy the Future: Charismatic Pentecostalism and African Liberation in a Neoliberal World,” in *Forthcoming: Pentecostalism and Politics in Africa*, ed. Adeshina Afolayan, Olajumoke Yacob-Haliso, and Toyin Falola (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2018), 6.

⁶⁴³ Mensa Otabil, *Beyond the Rivers of Ethiopia: A Biblical Revelation on God’s Purpose for the Black Race* (Pneuma Life Publishing, 1993), 69.

⁶⁴⁴ van Dijk, “‘Beyond the Rivers of Ethiopia,’ 179.

⁶⁴⁵ Duncan Forrester, *Theology and Politics-Signposts in Theology* (New York: Basil Blackwell Limited, 1998), 153.

⁶⁴⁶ van Dijk, “Beyond the Rivers of Ethiopia,” 163.

⁶⁴⁷ Emmanuel Kingsley Larbi, *Pentecostalism: The Eddies of Ghanaian Pentecostalism* (Centre for Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies and Blessed Publications, 2001), 349.

of African culture (tribalism, cultural stagnation, idolatry and fetishism) and African mentality (inferiority complex, the village mentality, leadership and apathy).⁶⁴⁸

Otabil's strategy in responding to the challenges he perceives has focused on using the word of God (the Bible) to change the mind-sets of Africans. In particular, he regards Christian scripture as a means for revealing to listeners their potential, and empowering them to influence, and perhaps even assume, political leadership.⁶⁴⁹

As the first step, he has especially challenged the perception that Africans are a cursed race. In his book *Beyond the Rivers of Ethiopia*, Otabil draws on various biblical texts to challenge what he describes as the biased teaching of Euro-American writers who have used the Bible to justify colonisation and slavery—sometimes even presenting these as a favour to Africans for their salvation and enlightenment.⁶⁵⁰ He admonishes Africans to recognise that the idea that they are a cursed race is a myth, arguing:

The essence of that myth was to create a racial superiority for one group and inferiority for another. It made one group appear as God's first choice and another as beneficiaries of the leftovers of humanity. When people distort history, they can easily isolate you in order to dominate you.⁶⁵¹

Countering this myth, he notes that “No individual or group of people have a patent on a particular ‘Esau or Jacob trait.’”⁶⁵² The African problem can be changed because it is not ‘cast in stone.’ Indeed, Otabil emphasises African potential, positing a special role for Africans as part of the Kingdom agenda of God. The idea that Africans are “crucial to God's redemptive and messianic plan for the world”⁶⁵³ forms the central subject matter of another of his books, *The Four Laws of Productivity*.

Otabil's argument in *The Four Laws of Prosperity* builds on the basic premise of human equality that he elaborates at length elsewhere. He outlines God's plan for humanity based on Genesis 1-3, which essentially commits God's creation to humans, admonishing them to be fruitful, multiply, replenish and subdue the earth.⁶⁵⁴ Otabil has taught that God's ‘directive’ to Adam and Eve to be fruitful, multiply, replenish and subdue the earth are not only “His principles of productivity and foundations for living,” but also the basis of God's economic

⁶⁴⁸ Paul Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity: Pentecostalism in a Globalizing African Economy* (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2004), 125.

⁶⁴⁹ Interview with Michael Nii Osah Tettey.

⁶⁵⁰ Otabil, *Beyond the Rivers of Ethiopia: A Biblical Revelation*, 17.

⁶⁵¹ Otabil, *Beyond the Rivers of Ethiopia: A Biblical Revelation*, 12.

⁶⁵² Mensa Otabil, *Buy the Future: Learning to Negotiate for a Future Better than Your Present*, (Lanham: Pneuma Life Publishing, 2002), 155.

⁶⁵³ van Dijk, “Beyond the Rivers of Ethiopia,” 176.

⁶⁵⁴ Otabil *Four Laws of Productivity*, 11-117. See also Mensa Otabil, “Dominion Mandate,” *True World of Yeshua*, 6 December 2014. <http://wordofyeshua.eu/dominion-mandate-1/>

system.⁶⁵⁵ He states: “The world, particularly the part called the Third World is looking desperately for a better economic system. All they need to do is to learn God’s system for the whole world to prosper.”⁶⁵⁶ Consequently, Otabil holds that based on the promise of God, if Africa will turn to the Bible, the continent will be prosperous.

Unlike other dominion preachers within the Charismatic strand of Ghanaian Pentecostalism who emphasise prayer, Otabil stresses human intervention—where education and hard work are combined with prayer and wise discernment to confront Africa’s challenges.⁶⁵⁷ He argues that Africa’s prosperity will depend on the initiatives of ordinary people, and not simply travailing prayers, the “casting out of demons or making intercessory declarations in the heavenly realms,”⁶⁵⁸ as others like Duncan-Williams suggests. In one of his speeches, he notes:

I prayed to God to prosper, but we have to change economic structures and social structures. If I don’t have that opportunity, I can pray all I want, and I’ll still be poor. When we were colonised, structures were built in our nations. The British came not because they thought we needed the gospel; they came because they wanted raw materials...and (to) impoverish you. You can pray all you want, but it won’t help...unless we start looking at the structures of our nations.⁶⁵⁹

Otabil and the ICGC, who consider themselves agents of transformation,⁶⁶⁰ have for three decades emphasised human effort and human agency as the key to Africa’s prosperity. In his book *Buy the Future* (along with others, such as: *Anointed to Start and Finish*; *Turning Your Weakness into Strength*; and *Goal Setting and Goal Getting*), Otabil’s teaching aims to motivate individuals, encouraging them to strive for self-development and pursue entrepreneurship in order to reduce their dependency on the state. He has for instance noted: “The key (to success) lies in a work-conscious, ownership conscious, skilled populace. Don’t think, ‘who can give me a job?’ Think, ‘when can I start a business?’”⁶⁶¹

In *Buy the Future*, he argues on the dominion principle that “the future has no power to design itself, but only takes the form and shape of (human) actions and inactions today.”⁶⁶² Here, Otabil treats the biblical story of Esau and Jacob as an exemplary parable. He identifies short term gain as the essential problem expressed in Esau exchanging his

⁶⁵⁵ Otabil, *Four Laws of Productivity*, 101.

⁶⁵⁶ Otabil, *Four Laws*, 131.

⁶⁵⁷ Gorder, “Beyond the Rivers of Africa,” 40.

⁶⁵⁸ Gorder, “Beyond the Rivers of Africa,” 40.

⁶⁵⁹ Cited in Paul Gifford, *Christianity in Africa: Its Public Role* (London: Hurst and Company, 1998), 242.

⁶⁶⁰ Interview with Tettey.

⁶⁶¹ Gifford, *Christianity in Africa: Its Public Role*, 242.

⁶⁶² Otabil, *Buy the Future*, 6.

seniority for food. This attitude continues to affect individuals' and political authorities' decision-making, with critical implications for their future and that of the state.⁶⁶³

In another book, *Anointed to Start and Finish*, Otabil deploys the biblical text of Zechariah 4:8-9 to advance the idea that once God places a vision in one's heart (seed), He additionally grants the grace to begin and bring the vision into reality (fruitfulness).⁶⁶⁴ He notes: "the eyes are for vision, but it is the hands that work to bring to pass the things that are seen." Otabil does not deny that individuals and nations (in particular, the nations of Africa) may start from a disadvantaged position. Nevertheless, individuals are encouraged to strive; biblical stories are invoked to commend persistence in the face of challenges. In *Turning Your Weakness into Strength*, for example, Otabil uses Proverbs 30:24-28 to demonstrate how, despite the fragility of the four tiny creatures (ant, rock badger, locusts and spider), they are able to survive in their natural habitat.⁶⁶⁵ The consistent moral emphasis of Otabil's teaching is: "human rather than spiritual agency, power of choice than fate, for self-responsibility in life, both on the level of individual persons and that of nations."⁶⁶⁶

Otabil does criticise political actors, as demonstrated in Chapters 3 and 4 above. A more characteristic emphasis, however, is his insistence that the key problems confronting African states lie in the choices individuals make in selecting their leaders. His teachings emphasise the power of choices, which underscore human agency. For example, in his sermon, 'Your Vote,' delivered in the run-up to the 2012 national elections, Otabil encouraged people to carefully consider the proposals of political parties before casting their vote, for the people's quality of life is determined through such choices: "The nation becomes what the citizens vote for ... so when we say let us pray for the nation, I say no! Let us pray for the citizens to make good choices because if the citizens do not make intelligent choices, God is not coming to rule Ghana for us."⁶⁶⁷

A key feature of Otabil's argument in this sermon relates to his distinguishing between divine and human choices (theocracy and democracy). Otabil argued that in a democracy like that of Ghana, people choose the President. Although a leader may not be God's choice, God nevertheless recognises the elected official as the leader of the people.⁶⁶⁸ This situation may be distinguished from the Old Testament model, where God chooses

⁶⁶³ Otabil, *Buy the Future*, 6.

⁶⁶⁴ Mensa Otabil, *Anointed to Start and Finish*, 6.

⁶⁶⁵ Mensa Otabil, *Turning Your Weakness into Strength* (Accra: Combent Impressions, 2006), 8-60.

⁶⁶⁶ De Witte, "African Liberation in a Neoliberal World," 6.

⁶⁶⁷ Mensa Otabil, "Your Vote," November 19, 2012, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w0sHFMt5L1s>.

⁶⁶⁸ Otabil, "Your Vote".

Saul, for example, as the leader of Israel. In a democracy power lies with the people and not God. Therefore, when people elect their leaders in a democracy, they give their right or transfer their power – which he described as their ‘sacred *votum*’—to elected officials. Thus when people vote, they vote to give their sovereignty into another’s hand over a certain period. This is why individual choices are powerful, and hence his call for individuals to be empowered to make the right judgment.

In this same message, Otabil outlines three important considerations for every voter. The first is that since one’s vote is a sacred gift, one should not trade it in exchange for temporal benefits (as in vote buying). Second, people should vote for their dreams and aspirations. In doing this, they should look out for leaders who have the future of the country at heart, who will not compromise on truth, honesty, purity and integrity. Third, when a government is voted into power, the people must demand accountability from elected leaders; if they fail to deliver on their promises, they must be voted out. This means people should not simply vote for the same party in every election cycle, even if they are not performing, simply because of past affinities or other considerations such as religion and ethnicity.

In many respects, Otabil’s ‘Your Vote’ sermon articulates a basic civic teaching that all people of voting age might be expected to know. However, the setting in which it was delivered, the biblical allusions ascribed to the message and the fact that he delivered it, made these teachings very attractive to Pentecostal and non-Pentecostal listeners.⁶⁶⁹ The power to choose and to make the right choices as Otabil teaches has been the focus of the ICCG. This teaching aims to empower individuals by shaping their lives’ journey with biblical insights so they can become influential people who can drive and create opportunities for others, even as they ascend to become leaders.

One issue that can be drawn out from Otabil’s political theology relates to this emphasis on the Bible—an emphasis that is consistent with Pentecostals’ generally uncompromising belief in the authority of the Bible (*Sola Scriptura*) in relation to all kinds of issues.⁶⁷⁰ Otabil is, however, selective and engages more in interpretation of the Bible in his messages. This distinguishes him from other Pentecostal leaders like Duncan-Williams who

⁶⁶⁹ See Hackett, “‘Devil Bustin’ Satellites,” 176. In a 2014 ranking by ETV Ghana (a private television station in Accra), Mensa Otabil was adjudged the most influential person in Ghana. Other Pentecostal leaders were also ranked ahead of religious and political leaders including the President and other top officials in government. Thus, Otabil’s views on what the electorate must consider before they vote, basic as it may seem, are very much respected because of his influence within the public sphere.

⁶⁷⁰ Patterson, “First Steps Toward a Pentecostal Political Theology,” 219. See also Michael Joseph Brown, “Black Theology and the Bible,” in *Cambridge Companion to Black Theology*, ed. Dwight N. Hopkins, Edward P. Antonio (New York: Maryknoll, 2007), 169.

mostly engage in liberal interpretations. Two key distinctions between Otabil's theology and that of Duncan-Williams can be identified—and will be discussed in greater detail below. First, Otabil's focus on Africa and the black race and not the entire human race; and second, his emphasis on human agency and not spiritual welfare and expectations. Otabil's particular focus on liberating the black race of mental slavery and his suggestion that Africans must prioritise individual efforts through personal initiatives depart sharply from Duncan-Williams, whose message has a general application and depends heavily on God's divine interventions for man's deliverance.

In summary, notwithstanding his social analysis of the Ghanaian situation, Otabil's ideological propositions are heavily premised on individual consciousness although his point of reference for its realisation is biblical revelation. Though his theology is African centred, his insistence that all humans share in the dominion granted man at creation and his empowerment agenda have some universal application, especially among oppressed or deprived societies.

6.2.2 Political Theology of Duncan-Williams

Duncan-Williams's political theology differs from that of Otabil. He sees the challenges of Africa as fundamentally spiritual (spiritual causality) and thus suggests spiritual solutions.⁶⁷¹ Unlike Otabil, he analyses political issues in metaphysical terms. This theological approach is not exclusive to Duncan-Williams, but is widely shared among other CMs.⁶⁷² These ministries which emphasise spiritual causality regard intercessory prayer as the only way to overcome and avert national and political crisis. Duncan-Williams describes prayer as “the instrument and weapon that executes the ‘executive decision’ of eternity (God). He has explained this view in his preaching and a number of his published books, including: *Prayer Moves God*; *Powers behind the Scenes*, *Divine Time*; *Birthing the Promises of God in Travail*; and *Enforcing Prophetic Degrees*.

According to Duncan-Williams, there are two opposing kingdoms in the spirit realms – good and evil kingdoms, the kingdoms of God and Satan. The evil kingdom opposes the good kingdom to prevent the physical manifestation of God's original intention for man to live a life of blessing.⁶⁷³ It is the physical manifestation of this opposition in the spirit realms that we see

⁶⁷¹ Gifford, *Christianity in Africa*, 85.

⁶⁷² See Amos Yong, *In the Days of Caesar*, 126–33; Andreas Heuser, “Encoding Caesar's Realm,” 273–81; Marshall, “God Is Not a Democrat”; Marshall, “Sovereignty of Miracles,” 197.

⁶⁷³ Nicholas Duncan-Williams, *Divine Timing and Avoiding the Dangers of Premature Exposure* (Florida: Xulon Press, 2012), 16. See also Nicholas Duncan-Williams, *Powers Behind the Scenes: Rediscover Your Power as a Believer to Overcome the Devices of the Enemy* (Middletown: Prayer Submit Publishing, 2016), 16–20.

influencing nations and governments to operate contrary to the will and purposes of God.⁶⁷⁴ Accordingly, Duncan-Williams notes in *Powers behind the Scenes* that “the contention over physical aspects of man is only as a result of the battle in the spirit.”⁶⁷⁵

Based on this understanding, Duncan-Williams teaches that Africa’s political challenges stem from the evil kingdom’s opposition to God’s will (‘the divine timing of God’). This state of affairs led to what he has described, in his book, as ‘pre-mature exposure to political power,’ which allows some individuals to ascend political power pre-maturely against the will of God (Galatians 4: 1-2, Ecclesiastes 10:16).⁶⁷⁶ This, he contends, exposes the nation to all sorts of attacks from territorial spirits, which are “the major root of Africa’s leadership crisis and the archenemy of peace and stability of democracy.”⁶⁷⁷

Nonetheless, nations will overcome these challenges if they seek the face of God. Duncan-Williams proposes a two-step process to achieve this. The first is to know the will of God (the original intention) and the second is to apply the rules of engagement (spiritual warfare). The will of God can be discerned in scripture, which reveals that one of God’s intentions is that God should determine who leads a nation at any point in time (John 19:11, Daniel 2:37-38, 4:17, 4:34-37). As he puts it:

God charts the course of all nations. He has a political calendar at every level of authority and rule, and as the King of the nations, has a blueprint for the politics of every nation, tribe tongue... To be able to move in line with God’s political will, one must know the mind of God (Isiah 45:1-4).⁶⁷⁸

Another of God’s intentions is for man to have dominion over the earth. However, man lost this dominion through Adam’s sin, a situation which led to the handing over of the dominion of earth to Satan—a doctrine known as ‘Adam’s Lease’. Duncan-Williams contends that following this, God is not capable of intervening in the affairs of the earth unless invoked through prayer.

Having discovered and understood the will of God, individuals must, as a second step, know ‘the rules of engagement’ that help restore God’s will. Duncan-Williams proposes engaging in the ‘spiritual warfare’ – drawing upon language used by the Apostle Paul in

⁶⁷⁴ Duncan-Williams, *Powers behind the Scenes*, 121.

⁶⁷⁵ Duncan-Williams, *Powers behind the Scenes*, 7.

⁶⁷⁶ Duncan-Williams, *Divine Timing*, 29.

⁶⁷⁷ Duncan-Williams, *Divine Timing*, 26.

⁶⁷⁸ Duncan-Williams, *Divine Timing*, 25–26.

Ephesians 6:13-18. This, he teaches, is the only way to thwart and ‘bind the strong man’,⁶⁷⁹ since “the battle that is waged in the spirit must be fought in the spirit.”⁶⁸⁰

The most visible form of this spiritual warfare, Duncan-Williams has suggested, is intercessory prayer. Through this form of prayer, one confesses (from *homologio*, meaning to agree with or assent to) the precepts of God. Such prayer, he argues, will move God to intervene to establish his will on earth.⁶⁸¹ “It is by prayer that we communicate with God to bring about the heavenly decrees, revelatory purposes and written judgements of the kingdom of God into the earth realm and override the power of the kingdom of Satan”.⁶⁸² In other words, without prayer, God is handicapped. God cannot work in isolation unless he receives authorisation from man.⁶⁸³ In essence human authorisation invokes God’s promises and thwarts the negative plans of evil spirits concerning the state.

Duncan-Williams’ ‘intercessory prayer proposal’ is similar to that of the Intercessors for Africa, who, according to Ogbu Kalu, served as the exponents of a political theology that has its core mandate of using prayer to change the lives of nations.⁶⁸⁴ Like the Intercessors, Duncan-Williams prescribes strategic and intentional prayers as a ‘political praxis’ where the social, political and economic situation is reformed by the power of prayer.⁶⁸⁵ In summary, intercessory prayer is the strategy to dealing with the kingdom of evil to pave way for the re-alignment of Ghana onto the path of political and economic prosperity.⁶⁸⁶

In practice, Duncan-Williams has consistently fostered occasions for intercession, for example, through his Ghana National Prayer Summit, Prayer Works and other public engagements (see Chapter 5). At these events, he prayed for the nation and its leadership and admonished political office holders to do same. At the national thanksgiving service in 1993, he advised then President Jerry John Rawlings saying:

I admonish you by the authority of God’s word that if you will stand for God, God will stand for you... And he has said in his word if you will forsake Him, then He will forsake you. But I trust the declaration of this national day of thanksgiving is a sign of you honouring God openly and publicly. That you as the President of this nation acknowledge Him and as we citizens of this nation look up to you for leadership that you will look up to God for leadership, wisdom and for

⁶⁷⁹ Nicholas Duncan-Williams, *Binding the Strongman* (Florida: Xulon Press, 2012), 45–51. See also Duncan-Williams, *Divine Timing*, 53–60.

⁶⁸⁰ Duncan-Williams, *Powers behind the Scenes*, 121.

⁶⁸¹ Duncan-Williams, *Prophetic Decrees*, 3–4.

⁶⁸² Nicholas Duncan Williams, *Prayer Moves God* (Middletown, 2016), 20.

⁶⁸³ National Prayer Submit, “Election Prayer.”

⁶⁸⁴ Williams, *Prayer Moves God*, 25. See also Ogbu U. Kalu, “Faith and Politics in Africa: Emergent Political Theology of Engagement in Nigeria” (Lecture, Paul B. Henry Lecture, Paul Henry Institute, Calvin College, 2003), 10.

⁶⁸⁵ Kalu, “Faith and Politics in Africa,” 10.

⁶⁸⁶ Kalu, “Faith and Politics,” 10–12.

counsel to take wise and intelligent decisions that will preserve this nation and will shape the destinies of generations yet unborn.⁶⁸⁷

In 2014, he prayed for the Ghana cedi to appreciate when the currency was depreciating at an unprecedented rate against other major currencies. This prayer generated much public debate. Many commentators derided it as comic relief, because matters of economic management are not spiritual. Duncan-Williams replied that his critics should not waste their time debating his action because, although it may sound illogical to them, his declaration was grounded in scripture.⁶⁸⁸ The nation would be limiting itself if it analysed issues only using logic and philosophy and ignored the ‘God factor’ in addressing political issues. Knowledge can only be acquired through education, he argued, but wisdom is the product of the fear of God; nobody can acquire wisdom without the fear of God.⁶⁸⁹

Duncan-Williams prioritises prayer for political leaders by the people. He argues that the President is the custodian of the nation and the key to the nation’s prosperity; Presidents represent the nation and are therefore spiritually exposed in spiritual warfare. Therefore it is crucial to pray for the President constantly. For Ghana to overcome its challenges and become peaceful and prosperous, individual citizens must engage in spiritual warfare. This invokes God’s intervention, bringing wisdom to political actors, enabling them to govern successfully. As he noted in his prayer at the national thanksgiving service in 1993: “there is no nation that can be great except by the might of God and there is no nation that is saved except in the defence of God (Psalm 33:12).”⁶⁹⁰

Like Otabil and the CoP, Duncan-Williams also makes use of the Bible to identify the nation’s problems and proffer solutions. The Bible helps people identify the purpose of God and appreciate the rules of engagement in re-establishing God’s reign on earth. Nevertheless his suggestion for human intervention through spiritual warfare is a marked departure from that of Otabil and the CoP, and their stress on human effort with respect to political intervention.

In summary, Duncan-Williams relates that poverty and political instability in many African countries stem from a lack of prayer, not from a lack of proper leadership or bad choices as the CPMs and Otabil suggest. Lack of intercession to avert the work of evil forces and their agents holds back the prosperity and peace of Ghana (and the African continent more

⁶⁸⁷ Nicholas Duncan Williams, “Prophetic Intercession for Ghana’s Oil Fifteen Years in Advance,” May 17, 2013, <https://www.facebook.com/archbishopduncanwilliams/videos/10151572601097964/>.

⁶⁸⁸ Jerry Tsatro Mordy, “Stop Wasting Your Time on My Cedi Prayer-Duncan-Williams Tells Ghanaians,” Politics, Myjoyonline.com, February 4, 2014, <https://www.modernghana.com/news/519889/stop-wasting-your-time-on-my-cedi-prayer-duncan-williams-t.html>.

⁶⁸⁹ Jerry Tsatro Mordy.

⁶⁹⁰ Williams, “Prophetic Intercession.”

generally).⁶⁹¹ This teaching concerning the prosperity of the nation places the burden of intercession on the entire congregation and not only the clergy—or political leaders per se. Consequently, one impact of Duncan-Williams’ approach is a potential politicisation of the congregation as a whole. The responsibility to pray fosters awareness of political issues among ordinary believers, and also encourages particular forms of political engagement. As Amos Yong notes, this form of spiritual warfare is a pre-emptive means of “countering the political effects of alleged spiritual entities.”⁶⁹² Conversely, this approach also lessens the burden of responsibility on elected authorities,⁶⁹³ such that the failures of politicians and elites—through corruption, incompetence and other dereliction of duty—may be all too readily attributed to lack of intercession from the governed.

6.3.0 Convergence and Divergence in Pentecostal Political Theologies

The political theologies that undergird Pentecostal engagement with politics in Ghana are more complex than scholars’ attribution of a spiritualised, dualistic theology have commonly suggested.⁶⁹⁴ The analysis of these political theologies above has highlighted a number of differences between PMs and other streams of Christianity on the one hand and among Pentecostal groups on the other hand. Indeed, even within the same Pentecostal strand, we find distinctive political interpretations.⁶⁹⁵

A number of themes run through these theologies. However for present purposes, the following analysis will relate three themes—leadership, responsibility, and religious and secular – to the three major chapters above on democracy, economy and spirituality (Chapter 3, 4 and 5 respectively). The analysis engages these themes in conversation with other post-colonial political theologies. The aim is to find out how Pentecostal thinking about politics relates to their participation and how this understanding is distinctive or similar to other forms of Christianity, the HMCs in particular.

⁶⁹¹ The National Intercessors Assembly, “Prayer Gives Authority: Archbishop Duncan-Believers,” February 18, 2011.

⁶⁹² Yong, *In the Days of Caesar*, 130.

⁶⁹³ Paul Gifford, “The Bible as a Political Document in Africa,” in *Scriptural Politics. The Bible and the Koran as Political Models in the Middle East and Africa*, ed. Niels Kastfelt (London: C. Hurst & Co. Publishers Ltd, 2003), 28.

⁶⁹⁴ Amos Yong outlines a variety of theological orientations (‘many tongues’) which are not necessarily dualistic in nature. See Yong, *In the Days of Caesar*, 109–117.

⁶⁹⁵ See Harold Hunter, “Pentecostal Social Engagement: Excerpts From Around the World” (IPH Archives and Research Centre, n.d.).

6.3.1 Secular and Religious

One major distinction between the political theologies of the PMs and the HMCs in Ghana concerns their views of the culpability of human agency and that of God in the state. While HMCs do not deny that God can intervene in the affairs of the state, they do not see the challenges of the state as primarily born out of the nation's neglect of God. Rather, they see these issues as arising from the failure of political actors.⁶⁹⁶ Influenced by Western institutions, HMCs regard political power as vested in temporal institutions and separate from religion.⁶⁹⁷ Accordingly, the HMCs have always attempted to build stable structures, high intellectual resources, and rich historical ecclesial traditions,⁶⁹⁸ to challenge excesses that may be committed by political regimes (be they legitimate or otherwise). This approach has been challenged. For example, Emmanuel Katongole argues that it has failed to resolve the challenges of Africa because it is based on western understanding that separates religion from politics.⁶⁹⁹ Instead, he has called for a paradigm shift: "from the external formalities of nation state politics to its inner workings or logistics, from skills and technical strategies to myths and visions, from a preoccupation with fixing a broken institution to imaging new experiments in social life in Africa".⁷⁰⁰ Katongole argues that a fresh vision of what 'Africa is and can be' is required – one that is rooted in the application of Christian social ethics.⁷⁰¹

Though Katongole's view departs from the PMs' assessments of the challenges facing Africa, it aligns in some respects. He argues that Africa's problems are caused by colonialism, neo-colonialism and Africa's continuous dependency on Western countries. The three PMs addressed in this chapter each acknowledge these factors, though differ in the emphasis they place upon them. Otabil's analysis is closest to Katongole's. He, too, cites colonialism and mental slavery as major problems, though he equally identifies contextual issues such as nepotism, bad or old-fashioned traditions, tribalism and incompetent leadership as problems. By contrast, Duncan-Williams and the CoP see the overarching problems as essentially spiritual: neglect of God and the people's failure to invoke God's presence for their own good.

⁶⁹⁶ See for instance Presbyterian Church of Ghana, *Cry Justice* (Accra: Presbyterian Church of Ghana, 2004). *Cry Justice* is a compilation of communiques from the Presbyterian Church of Ghana to various governments in which the failure of political leadership is usually cited as the reason for the challenges of country.

⁶⁹⁷ Asamoah-Gyadu, "God Bless Our Homeland Ghana," 182.

⁶⁹⁸ Asamoah-Gyadu, "God Bless Our Homeland Ghana," 169.

⁶⁹⁹ Emmanuel Katongole, *The Sacrifice of Africa: A Political Theology for Africa* By. (William B Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2011), 50. Katongole is a Roman Catholic Priest from Uganda and a theologian teaching at the Duke Divinity School in the USA.

⁷⁰⁰ Katongole, *The Sacrifice of Africa*, 61.

⁷⁰¹ Katongole, *The Sacrifice of Africa*, 61.

Despite these differences, there is a strong alignment between Katongole and the PMs on the issue of not separating the state from the church, and on the necessity of looking inwardly (within the state) to find solutions. All three PMs see the churches as having solutions to the problems of the state and their theologies seek for more collaboration between the secular and religious realms.⁷⁰² For instance, as noted above, Otabil stresses that the Bible contains truths on how the state can overcome its challenges. Based on this understanding, he constantly uses biblical characters and allusions to show that Christianity has the solutions that can help transform Ghana's situation. Similarly, the CoP emphasises the church as a repository of godly personnel – spirit-filled people who can serve in government to stamp out corruption and other related vices. Likewise, Duncan-Williams regards divine intervention in the affairs of the state as fundamental to the nation's prosperity, since only such intervention can bring about God's original intention of prosperity for humanity.

In looking inwardly for solutions, it is Otabil who stresses most greatly the need for Africans to fix their own problems. Otabil's claim to having been called to liberate the black people means that his prescribed solution is highly contextual. Note for example his criticism and suggestion to African leaders (Chapter 3) that the continent will not develop if its leaders continue to seek external funding for development. The lack of emphasis by the CoP and Duncan-Williams in looking inward for solutions seems to arise from the fact that their prescribed solution is premised on fulfilling God's mandate and reliance on the enabling power of God. In these circumstances, the source of the solution lies with God and thus the prescribed solution is already established.

In the end, most PMs see the problems of the state as having more to do with the continuous rejection and elimination of God from the affairs of the state. Hence, despite secular analysis of some national challenges, they nonetheless defer to God through scripture, prayer and prophetic declarations to interpret and explain the nation's challenges. They invariably seek greater collaboration between the state and the church.⁷⁰³

6.3.2 *Leadership and Democracy*

Although PMs have adapted to democracy as the best option for governance, they do not accept the idea that political power derives from the people. As the GPCC contended in their presentation to the consultative assembly in 1990, they rather see power as deriving from

⁷⁰² Quayesi-Amakye, *Christology and Evil in Ghana*, 180–81.

⁷⁰³ Asamoah-Gyadu, "God Bless Our Home Land Ghana," 170.

God.⁷⁰⁴ The failure of post-colonial governments has tended to exacerbate this tendency. This includes the failures of Fourth Republican leaders who have not met the aspirations of the governed, thus “opening up new discursive spaces for thinking and talking about political communities and projects, and not least, about the sources and legitimacy of political power.”⁷⁰⁵

In pursuance of this agenda, PMs have sought what Ogbu Kalu describes as the rule of the saints.⁷⁰⁶ They have done so through a variety of means – ‘praying brethren into political offices,’ vying for the presidency, encouraging others to take up political appointments and forecasting the presidency of others through prophesy. Consider, for instance, the CoP’s vision 2018, which states that while the Church will encourage members to accept political appointments to serve in the national interest, provided such appointments are considered by the individuals as God’s will and as a calling to divine service.” Similar ideas are advanced in Otabil’s sermon on ‘Your Vote’, concerning the importance of elections of leaders: although voting is a human undertaking of free will, such choices are affirmed by God – owing to the sacredness of the sovereignty He has bequeathed to humans (dominion). There is also Duncan Williams’ constant invitation to political actors to his church in order to pray for them to have wisdom to rule. As Saah explained:

We prayed for people in the hope that they will win and become members of parliament or become cabinet ministers. That also increases our visibility, it increases our exposure and in the high place of power, our name will be known because that is our minister there... either we pray for the person privately or we can even pray for him publicly. There is nothing wrong when the righteous rule, (instead) the people rejoice.⁷⁰⁷

Therefore, despite the advantage that will accrue to the state in choosing the right leaders that can transform the country, Pentecostal undertaking sees beyond these temporal realms. Its undertaking sees the temporal realms as a means to achieving a kingdom agenda and not an end in itself. It has an inbuilt eschatological motif, even if it will be long in coming or even impossible to achieve entirely. This motif is made evident in the CoP’s Vision 2018 document, where Onyinah notes: “Human and other related resources will be harnessed towards bringing down the kingdom and the will of God to impact all spheres of influence of society, including business, economy, education, media, governance, politics, traditional rule, culture and arts, the family, sports, entertainment, and religion.”⁷⁰⁸

⁷⁰⁴ Ghana Pentecostal Council, “The Church Response to the Current Debate on the Quest for a Suitable Political System for the Republic of Ghana” (Ghana Pentecostal Council, n.d.). See also Lindhardt, “Introduction: Presence and Impact,” 32.

⁷⁰⁵ Lindhardt, “Introduction: Presence and Impact,” 32.

⁷⁰⁶ Kalu, *African Pentecostalism*, 219.

⁷⁰⁷ Interview with Saah.

⁷⁰⁸ The Church of Pentecost, “Vision 2018,” 18.

This eschatological orientation explains why Duncan-Williams has not recently expressed the same concerns as most of the international community over President Donald Trump's decision to move the American embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. Duncan-Williams assured his congregation that Trump's decision confirmed biblical prophecy and should be welcome news to anyone who believes in the end time:

There is something beyond reasoning and logic that is orchestrating the events of our time beyond the control and reach of man. If we start studying the signs of the end time, one of the things that we have to really look out for, is when the capital (of Israel) moves from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem and we have to pray that it happens.⁷⁰⁹

This end-time agenda is reinforced in the Pentecostal attitude towards certain policies and laws particularly those relating to same-sex relations—laws that have or have the potential to affect Pentecostal imagination of re-establishing God's domination on earth.

Additionally, although there have not been explicit attempts to use their numbers to determine the nation's leadership, PMs are conscious, as I will show in the next chapter, that their numbers can be mobilised for political action. Consequently, in participating in the democratic culture of Ghana, Pentecostal reflection and actions are driven by eschatology such that all the mundane issues that they are engaged in are implicitly aimed at achieving an end-time agenda. This explains in part why, while they may prefer a democratic rule, they may not be overly worried about authoritarian leadership—not only because such leadership has been allowed by God, but also because it may not ultimately be able to stop the fulfilment of God's agenda for the nation and by extension the nations of the world.

6.3.3 Responsibility and the Economy

Notwithstanding the clear differences in the political theologies of CPMs and the CMs, one common issue is responsibility. They all agree that human agency (ordinary people) is crucial to the realisation of economic development – albeit in different ways. This emphasis reflects their belief in the ability of faith to transform 'ordinary' individuals who will lead the socio-political transformation of the nation. Many PMs insist that transformation of the nation "must follow the conversion and salvation of a sufficiently large number of individuals."⁷¹⁰ For instance, the CPMs advocate a theology of national concern where spirit-filled individuals are encouraged to enter politics. Within the CMs, emphasis is placed upon the application of scripture to empower individuals to take initiatives to overcome their socio-economic

⁷⁰⁹ Ghanaweb, "Donald Trump Has Come to Fulfil Signs of the End Time – Duncan Williams," *General News* December 8, 2017.

⁷¹⁰ Lindhardt, "Introduction: Presence and Impact," 30.

difficulties; the ACI focuses more on intercessory prayers by individual Christians to directly manifest God's intention of prosperity for the nations.

These emphases contrast sharply with that of HMCs, which target political actors. HMCs generally consider that, in most circumstances, ordinary people will not be able to stand up to the power of the state. They insist that once the governed surrender their sovereignty to political actors, by election or through appointment, the burden of accountability shifts to the 'governor'. Irrespective of the choice of the electorate, the expectation is that political actors will always represent the best interest of the state. By contrast, PMs seem to be advocating a paradigm shift, in which the governed actually assume greater direct responsibility in national affairs. By praying to invoke God's presence in the affairs of the state, seeking discernment in the choice of leader, and by vying for political office, ordinary believers are encouraged to be more active in political engagement.

Nonetheless the Pentecostals differ on the extent of human responsibility as compared with that of God. For example, Duncan-Williams claims that God cannot intervene in the affairs of the state to bring wisdom and counsel to the leader unless God is invited to do so. Otabil, on the other hand, teaches that God's inability to intervene in the affairs of the nation is not because He is handicapped or waiting to be invited, but because the choice of the leader is the choice of the people and God respects that choice (the principle of free will). Hence, unlike Duncan-Williams, who proposes human intervention through intercessory prayers to God as the primary initiative to realising a prosperous nation, Otabil recommends prayers for the citizenry to make an appropriate choice in a leader. The CPCs recommend direct participation of individual PMs.

6.4.0 Conclusion

This chapter has undertaken an examination of the political theologies of the major PMs in Ghana. It has recounted the historical and contemporary circumstances, as well as the biblical basis that shaped the previous and current understanding of PMs regarding the political sphere. In doing so, the chapter has gone beyond the works of scholars like Rijk van Dijk and Quayesi-Amakye. The chapter has demonstrated that PMs have embraced old-fashioned moral agendas (prophetic positioning and insights from classical Christian traditions), but also incorporated post-colonial themes. These have led to specific and distinctive theological uses of political terminology that influence the way they act and think about politics and the public sphere in general.

In demonstrating the shifts and evolution of Pentecostal theologies as well as the diversity and convergence in Pentecostal understandings of the political sphere, the chapter has demonstrated that the Pentecostal political agenda has an inherent other-worldly concern. There is a strong eschatological motive. This is not escapist, but focused on salvaging what is left of the world which PMs know through biblical prophecy can only be saved partly – even if they unexpectedly dominate the political realm until the Parousia. In analysing the Pentecostal interpretation of political life in Ghana, the chapter has also demonstrated the sharp distinction between Pentecostal understandings of politics and that of the HMCs. Significantly, in the democratic context, a key distinction is that while the HMCs prioritise political leaders in seeking the realisation of the national development, the PMs stress the role of ordinary individuals in processes of national transformation.

The next chapter examines the factors that account for the new Pentecostal political thinking that has given rise to a variety of engagements during the Fourth Republican era.

CHAPTER 7: THE NEW PENTECOSTAL POLITICS

The church exists within a nation. Without good governance and a harmonious political atmosphere in a nation, the church will not have peace to worship and serve God's purpose. The church needs to play its 'prophetic role' effectively in order for peace and tranquillity to reign in the nation. This responsibility is heightened by the fact that approximately one of every thirteen Ghanaians is a member of the Church of Pentecost. This means that the church has a very significant influence over the Ghanaian populace. (Church of Pentecost, Five-Year Vision, 2013-2018)

7.0.0 Introduction

We established in the introductory chapter that PMs were less engaged in pre-Fourth Republican politics and concluded that their current interface with politics is a Fourth Republic phenomenon. The limited encounters in the political sphere during this first period mostly revolved around spiritual matters concerning the state and not on profane issues of government policy, social justice, human rights and the abuse of power. What then are the reasons that led to enhanced Pentecostal engagement in politics after 1992?

The above quote from the five-year vision of the CoP summarises the two main reasons that have engendered Pentecostal interest in politics: the growth of PMs and Ghana's return to democracy in 1993. The CoP's interest in politics is premised on the fact that a sizeable number of the Ghanaian population are its members and they therefore have an influence and a stake in political issues. However, this influence and stake can only be exerted in a democratic context where divergent views and opinions are respected. Hence democracy is key to their participation in national politics.

This chapter analyses these two factors and other related reasons that led PMs to shift from their enclave to direct political engagement. The chapter is divided into parts. The first is a summary of scholarly contextualisation of why PMs have become more political. The second is an extensive analysis of the reasons why they have exhibited an enhanced engagement with public politics during the Fourth Republican era.

7.1.0 Summary of Scholarship on Pentecostal Political Interest

The literature on Pentecostalism shows that the various reasons adduced for increased Pentecostal interest vary depending on the context and strand of Pentecostalism. In Nigeria, for example, the surge in the Pentecostal participation in politics was in response to Muslim hegemony while in Latin America, increased participation can be attributed to the growth of

Pentecostalism and the new democratic environments between the 1970s and 2000s.⁷¹¹ John F. McCauley, drawing on data collected from both patrons and clients in Ghana, attributes the Pentecostal entry into politics to four socio-economic changes: (1) “ongoing weakness in the state’s ability to provide social welfare; (2) a change in social values in the wake of the global financial crisis; (3) expanding state control over customary activities; and (4) urbanization.”⁷¹² These changes, McCauley contends, created gaps which PMs are filling as alternative institutions.⁷¹³ McCauley concludes that Pentecostalism’s role as an “alternative informal institution is not a function of Weberian ethics or occult spiritualities, but rather its ability to fill voids left by the state and to provide new social networks.”⁷¹⁴

Similarly, Cedric Mayrargue has also observed that political liberalisation and the weakening of state control over democratisation processes have engendered the development of multiple political alternatives of which PMs are one. He argues that “the state’s loss of credibility, its reduced margins for manoeuvre, and its abandonment of social services (health, education, etc.),”⁷¹⁵ have created space which leads to the emergence of new religious actors like the PMs as important stakeholders in politics. Mayrargue argues that Pentecostal political dynamics cannot be analysed in isolation from their context.⁷¹⁶ He has suggested that “although religion in Africa today is undergoing a process of pluralisation and diversification, and experiencing the emergence of new actors, existing diversity due to the historical spread of religious movements, and the tensions between them, should be in no way underplayed.”

Consequently, Cedric Mayrargue identifies the religious and the political contexts as two factors that explain the nature of the politicisation of PMs. While we support the ‘context argument’ and adopt these two broad contextual factors to explain the increased interest in Ghanaian politics by PMs, we depart from Mayrargue on the specific contextual issue he cites to buttress his argument. Although we consider state failure to be a factor in the Pentecostal political participation, we do not agree that it is the main reason for Pentecostal shift, at least within the Ghanaian context. Instead, the chapter will demonstrate through interviews with Pentecostal leaders and the examination of policy documents of Pentecostal ministries, that the

⁷¹¹ See Calvin L. Smith “Revolutionaries and Revivalists: Pentecostal Eschatology, Politics and the Nicaraguan Revolution,” *The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 30 no.1 (2008):55-82; and Paul Freston, *Protestant Political Parties: A Global Survey* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004).

⁷¹² John F. McCauley, “Africa’s New Big Man Rule? Pentecostalism and Patronage in Ghana,” *African Affairs* 112, no. 446 (2013): 1.

⁷¹³ McCauley, “Africa’s New Big Man Rule?,” 1.

⁷¹⁴ Cedric Mayrargue, “The Paradoxes of Pentecostalism in Sub-Saharan Africa,” *The Institut Français Des Relations Internationales*, April 2008, 13.

⁷¹⁵ Mayrargue, “The Paradoxes of Pentecostalism,” 13.

⁷¹⁶ Mayrargue, “The Paradoxes of Pentecostalism” 13.

growth of Pentecostal churches has been fostered by a theological appeal and Ghana's return to constitutional rule in 1993 which guarantees individual freedoms and a liberalised media landscape and these are the main reasons for the increased political participation of PMs during this Republic. Thus it is the interrelation between these two factors that has engendered Pentecostal interest in politics. The growth of Pentecostalism has been sustained because of the democratic culture that allows this stream of Christianity to freely practise and manifest their religion.

7.2.0 The New Pentecostal Politics

Historically, Pentecostalism came into most parts of Africa through African initiatives mainly initiated by Prophets and American missionaries. For most of the 20th century, this first wave of Pentecostalism focused on winning souls and planting churches due to its premillennial orientation which was prioritised by most of its precursors. For instance, though the Assemblies of God Church, which was initiated in the Northern part of present day Ghana by American missionaries, engaged the colonial governments in the areas of education and health, the former was less interested in direct political issues, especially those concerning independence which the HMCs were actively involved in. Likewise, the local initiators of PMs like the Christ Apostolic Church were more interested in spiritual renewal and therefore focused their efforts on spreading the power of the Holy Spirit and planting churches. This was against the then more established Historic Mission Churches (HMCs) that had a greater following and had been engaging both colonial and post-colonial governments for more than a century.

Again, most of these Pentecostal ministries, unlike the HMCs, inherited a limited interest in politics. For example, the counterpart church of Peter Anim (Faith Tabernacle Ministry of Philadelphia, and Apostolic Faith in Oregon) and that of James McKeown (Apostolic Church Bradford, Britain) were focused on spiritual empowerment for evangelism (witnessing) and thus were less concerned with the politics of their day. The HMCs, however, had long standing relations with national and multinational religious groups that they could rely on when their relationships with then authoritarian regimes soured. The Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference, for instance, knew it could count on the Vatican, while the Christian Council of Ghana could also seek support from the World Council of Churches.

Additionally, with an initial core membership from the largely uneducated lower class and the fear of military brutality PMs stayed away from politics. They took solace in the fact that as governments are established by God, they must be supported and not opposed. Conversely, a sizeable number of HMCs' members were from the elites and the middle class—

some of whom were persecuted by the military regimes. Thus, the HMCs in most cases were engaged in activities that would challenge the excesses of these authoritarian regimes and attempt to restore democratic rule.

In the Fourth Republic, PMs have become more politically engaged and what follows is an analysis of the two main factors that have made this possible. These factors can be traced directly to changes in the previous contextual state of affairs that made them stay away from politics – undemocratic rule and fewer members in comparison with the HMCs that could be mobilised for political action.

7.2.1 Demographic Factors

There has been considerable growth in Christian affiliation in the post-independence era generally, but these levels of increase have been particularly remarkable within the Pentecostal ministries.⁷¹⁷ This growth is evident in the number of services held on Sundays and the number of branches that have sprung up in the last three decades across the length and breadth of the country. With previous presence in the capital alone, most of these churches are now nationwide. Reporting in 2004, Paul Gifford observed that the Pentecostal explosion “has not only spawned a raft of new churches and decimated the African Initiated Churches (AICs), but has had an enormous influence on the HMCs too, over and above taking their members.”⁷¹⁸ This has compelled the HMCs to adopt Pentecostal elements and accommodate renewal groups within their fold in an effort to meet the spiritual needs of their members.⁷¹⁹ This has been described as the charismatisation or Pentecostalisation of the HMCs.⁷²⁰

Although there is no available data on the number of conversions from the HMCs to Pentecostal Churches, the 1988 report of Rev. Dr Ross Campbell, then Coordinator of the Ghana National Evangelism Committee on the Evangelism Committee survey of the ten regions of Ghana revealed that the major Pentecostal strands were growing faster than the other

⁷¹⁷ Mary Grace Reich, “Christian Institutions in Ghanaian Politics: Social Capital and Investments in Democracy” (2012), 3.

⁷¹⁸ Gifford, *Christianity in Africa: Its Public Role*, 95. See also Dovlo, “Studying New Religious Movements,” 5.

⁷¹⁹ Atiemo, *The Rise of Charismatic Movements in the MCs in Ghana* (Accra: Asempa Publishers, 1993), 23–28. See also Dovlo, “The Church in Africa and Religious Pluralism,” 62. Omenyo “The Charismatic Renewal Movement in Ghana,” 175; Gifford, “Ghana’s Charismatic Churches,” 254. Kwame Bediako, “Africa and Christianity on the Threshold of the Third Millennium: The Religious Dimension,” *African Affairs* 99 (2000): 312.

⁷²⁰ Omenyo, *Pentecost outside Pentecostalism*, 24; Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*, 26–29; Gifford, *Ghana’s New Christianity*, 39.

major denominations.⁷²¹ For instance, the CoP had more local congregations and regular attendance than the Presbyterian and Methodist churches.⁷²² He further reported that in the past ten years (1978-1988), 2,050 new churches were established by the major Pentecostal denominations as compared with 1,500 by the older denominations.⁷²³ These church planting statistics indicate that the PMs were growing at a faster pace than the HMCs.

Between 1960 and 1985, the proportion of the Ghanaian population that identified themselves as Christian rose from 41% to 62%. The largest growth was witnessed in the Independent African Churches⁷²⁴ and Pentecostal churches, which increased from 1% and 2% to 14% and 8% respectively during this period.⁷²⁵ The next strongest growth in affiliation was in the Catholic Church, which increased to 15%; while the Protestant proportion of the population remained the same (25%).⁷²⁶ The astronomical growth of the PMs and generally the Christian churches within this period was partly attributable to their vigorous evangelism and focus on church planting during this period.

This growth is attributable to the anticipation of the millennial reign of Jesus Christ, but more importantly in the specific case of Ghana the concerted work of the Ghana Evangelism Committee which began in 1974. The Committee introduced the 'New Life for All Movement' into the churches of Ghana which was aimed at evangelising the whole nation. The 'New Life for All Movement', launched in major denominations in 1975 under the slogan 'Total Evangelization through Total Mobilization' was aimed at saturating "the nation (Ghana) with active witnessing churches—at least one for every community of 300-1000 people."⁷²⁷

This strategy, which initially focused on providing training and training materials for over 2000 churches, was reinforced in 1977 with a revised strategy of making disciples through the process of multiplication.⁷²⁸ The strategy involved the training 120 pastors and equipping them to also train lay persons for to witness, win and disciple. Campbell reports that all the churches involved in this new approach experienced unprecedented growth with some churches

⁷²¹ Ross Campbell, "The Ghana National Movement of Evangelism" (Viv Grigg and the Encarnação Alliance Training Commission, May 15, 1999), [http://www.urbanleaders.org/weburblead2/Readings/Evangelism%20\(Ghana\).htm](http://www.urbanleaders.org/weburblead2/Readings/Evangelism%20(Ghana).htm).

⁷²² Campbell, "The Ghana National Movement of Evangelism."

⁷²³ Campbell, "The Ghana National Movement of Evangelism."

⁷²⁴ African Independent Churches are independent churches that were formed by the initiatives of Africans and thus their origin and organisation are indigenous.

⁷²⁵ According to the post-independence population census of 1960, Christians made up 41 % of the total Ghanaian population. The breakdown of the various Christian sects was: 25%Protestant (non-Pentecostal), 13%Roman Catholic, 2% Protestant (Pentecostal) and1% Independent African Churches. See David Owusu-Ansah, *Ghana: Religion and Society* (Library of Congress Country Studies, November 1994)

⁷²⁶ David Owusu-Ansah, *Ghana: Religion and Society*

⁷²⁷ Campbell, "The Ghana National Movement of Evangelism."

⁷²⁸ Campbell, "The Ghana National Movement of Evangelism."

experiencing growth in attendance of over 1,000% and the establishment of up to four new congregations.⁷²⁹ In essence, these evangelism initiatives undertaken by the Ghana Evangelism Committee in collaboration with the Protestant churches in Ghana were the reasons for the astronomical growth of the Christian Churches in Ghana.

The growth in the Pentecostal stream as per the 2000 and 2010 Population and Housing Census is mostly attributed to the charismatic strand of Pentecostal churches. The proliferation of the charismatic strand of Pentecostal churches, most of which began in the 1970s and 1980s but peaked in the early 1990s with their prosperity gospel, contributed immensely to the increased membership of the Pentecostal groups within these periods. The appeal of the prosperity gospel portended that the Kingdom of God is not only about other-worldly gains but also about this-worldly access to good health and material well-being. The appeal in this charismatic message which is discussed in detail below was that it aligned with the traditional cosmology or worldview that expresses life in two worlds—visible and invisible—that are in constant interaction.⁷³⁰ This was a new brand of theology different from that of the classical Pentecostal understanding that postpones prosperity for eternity.

According to the 2000 Population and Housing Census of Ghana, 24.1% (out of 61.2% of the Ghanaian population who claimed to be Christians) were affiliated to Pentecostal churches.⁷³¹ However, within the same period, the percentage that claimed Catholic Church affiliation dropped by only 0.1% while the Protestant Christian groups declined by 6.4% – recording 15.1% and 18.6% respectively. 11% was recorded in favour of other Christians.⁷³² In the 2010 Census, the Christian population increased by 10% (i.e. from 61.2% to 71.2%). Out of this, 28.3% were PMs, Catholics 13.1%, Protestants 18.4%, and other Christians 11.4%.⁷³³ These demographic figures reveal a steady growth in the Christian population of Ghana. However, the shift in Christian growth weighs heavily in favour of the Pentecostal churches. Thus the PMs are presently not only the largest Christian sub-type but also the largest religious

⁷²⁹ Campbell, “The Ghana National Movement of Evangelism.”

⁷³⁰ Emmanuel K. Anim, “The Prosperity Gospel in Ghana and the Primal Imagination,” *Pentvars Journal*, 4 no.2 68 (2010), 68.

⁷³¹ Ghana Statistical Service, *2000 Population and Housing Census* (Ghana Statistical Service, 2005).

⁷³² ‘Other Christian’ refers to people who claim to be Christians, but are not affiliated to any church or denomination. It also represents those Christian groups who ethos cannot be easily classified under the rubric employed by the statistical service. See Ghana Statistical Service, *2010 Census*, 6.

⁷³³ In seven out of the ten regions in Ghana, the dominant religious group was ‘Pentecostal’. The proportions ranged from 44.6% Pentecostal in Greater Accra region to 24.5% in Brong Ahafo. The exceptions were the three northern parts of the country – Northern Region, Upper East and Upper West. See Ghana Statistical Service, *2010 Population and Housing Census, Summary Report of Final Results* (Ghana Statistical Service, May, 2012), 40.

group in Ghana.⁷³⁴ This continuous growth among PMs is largely due to continuous human and financial investment into evangelism and the introduction of social interventions which were not previously a priority because of premillennialism.⁷³⁵

Aside the specific reasons that are attributable to periodical increases in Pentecostal growth, one overarching factor for this stream of Christianity's astronomical growth is attributed to the appeal of the Pentecostal theology—which parallels aspects of Ghanaian primeval thought.⁷³⁶ Pentecostalism professes a dualistic view of life similar to that of Ghanaians,⁷³⁷ dualistic worldview that is made up of the spiritual and the physical. Both worldviews of the PMs and Ghanaians is that of “mystical causality, (in which) the physical serves as the vehicle for the spiritual.”⁷³⁸ In other words, the spiritual gives meaning to the physical. Thus it has been noted that:

Among the most salient features of African epistemologies ... is a conviction that the material and immaterial aspects of life cannot be separated, although they can be distinguished from each other, much as the two sides of a coin can be discerned but not parted. ... Religion in sub-Saharan Africa is best considered as a belief in the existence of an invisible world, distinct but not separate from the visible one that is home to spiritual beings with effective powers over the material world.⁷³⁹

In effect “what is primarily real is the spiritual.”⁷⁴⁰ In Ghanaian societies, the spirit world is conceived as one made up of both benevolent and malicious spirits who can influence the

⁷³⁴ These figures are also evident in the number of branches of Pentecostal churches scattered across the length and breadth of the country. With previous presence in the capital alone, most of these churches are growing by leaps and bounds, with overseas branches in African, Europe, the Americas and Asia.

⁷³⁵ See the works of Philippus Rudolph Mans, “The Ministry Strategy of the Church of Pentecost in Accra with Specific Focus on Children: An Exploratory Study,” (Unpublished Doctor of Theology in Practical Theology: University of Stellenbosch Supervisor, 2015), 79-82; Moses Kumi Asamoah, The Execution of Social Responsibility As An Image Building Strategy: The Case of International Central Gospel Church, *European Journal of Business and Social Sciences*, 2, No.7 (2013), 180-191; Emmanuel Louis Nterful, Church Expansion through Church Planting in Ghana: A Case Study of the Lighthouse Chapel International Model (Unpublished Master of Arts in Missiology: Greenwich School of Theology, 2013), 12-32, 111-128

⁷³⁶ Cephas Omenyo, “Charismatic Churches in Ghana and Contextualization,” *Exchange* 31, no. 3 (2002): 252–77; Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics: Current Developments within Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana*; Kwabena J. Darkwa Amanor, “Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches in Ghana and the African Culture: Confrontation or Compromise?” *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 18, no. 1 (2009): 123–40. Lord Elorm-Donkor, “African Worldview and Christian Pneumatology: Divergences and Convergences,” *Didache: Faithful Teaching* 12, no. 1 (2012): 1–14.

⁷³⁷ Akan Soteriology is usually used in explaining the African worldview and for that matter Ghanaians. The Akans make up 48.1 of the Ghanaian, but their influence in terms of their worldview has become so dominant in the country due to migration and urbanisation. This is also a strong worldview within Sub-Saharan Africa and thus has also attracted similar Pentecostal theologies in responding to these needs. We will however, for the purposes of this thesis restrict ourselves to the Ghanaian context. See, George Ebalu Ogbenika, *The Idea of the Spirit in African Philosophy* (Denver: Outskirts Press, 2008), XV.

⁷³⁸ Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics: Current Developments within Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana*, 100.

⁷³⁹ Stephen Ellis and Gerrie ter Haar, “Religion and Politics: Taking African Epistemologies Seriously,” *Journal of Modern African Studies* 45, no. 3 (2007): 387.

⁷⁴⁰ Asamoah-Gyadu, “The Promise Is for You and Your Children,” 4.

course of human endeavour for good or ill respectively.⁷⁴¹ Hence Kwame Bediako has noted that “religious belief that people can enter into relationships with the benevolent spirit world, share in his powers and blessings and thereby receive protection from evil powers reveal the profound attachment to the transcendent source as a realm of true life and practical salvation.”⁷⁴²

This Ghanaian primal culture is persistent such that formal conversion from African Indigenous Religion did not imply total ‘cultural conversion’ in the strict sense.⁷⁴³ The primal worldview persists even with formal conversion.⁷⁴⁴ What this means is that Ghanaians’ “highly spiritual worldview (thus) colours their idea of causality which in fact leans heavily on the spiritual.”⁷⁴⁵

However, the HMCs did not initially consider these beliefs central to the Ghanaian, but branded them as superstitious.⁷⁴⁶ PMs, on their part, did not reject these beliefs but rather accepted them and have successfully reconciled Pentecostal Christianity with this Ghanaian worldview. They have used the Pentecostal theological message to offer responses to the questions that are raised by the worldview of Ghanaians.⁷⁴⁷ Consequently, PMs offer Christian solutions of somewhat indigenous religious orientations for problems stemming from such aspects of the worldview of indigenous religion.⁷⁴⁸

Nevertheless, it must be noted that PMs have not embraced the conception of the world on the terms of the Ghanaian primal view but on its own (Pentecostal) terms. PMs have done this by rearticulating the Ghanaian worldview. In rearticulating this worldview, PMs respond by recognising the fact that all primary causality is attributable to spiritual sources such as Satan, demons and witchcraft and must be dealt with spiritually.⁷⁴⁹ It then presents the Holy Spirit as the ultimate and supernatural power that is able to deal with these spirits in the immediate term. PMs achieve this by employing the power of the Holy Spirit to penetrate “the

⁷⁴¹ Omenyo, “Charismatic Churches in Ghana and Contextualization,” 257.

⁷⁴² Kwame Bediako, *Christianity in Africa: The Renewal of a Non-Western Religion* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1995), 94.

⁷⁴³ Omenyo, “Charismatic Churches in Ghana and Contextualization,” 254.

⁷⁴⁴ Omenyo, 254. See also Cephas Omenyo, “Akan Religion,” ed. Stephen D. Glazier, *Encyclopaedia of African and African-American Religions* (New York & London: Routledge, 2001), 31.

⁷⁴⁵ Omenyo, “Charismatic Churches in Ghana and Contextualization,” 256.

⁷⁴⁶ van Dijk, “Pentecostalism and the Politics of Prophetic Power,” 160.

⁷⁴⁷ Omenyo, “Charismatic Churches in Ghana and Contextualization,” 254. See also van Dijk, “Pentecostalism and the Politics of Prophetic Power,” 160–161.

⁷⁴⁸ Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, “Ghana,” *Encyclopaedia of Politics and Religion* (Washington: Congressional Quarterly Press, 2007), 346.

⁷⁴⁹ Omenyo, “Charismatic Churches in Ghana and Contextualization,” 266. See also J.K. Asamoah-Gyadu, “Pulling Down Strongholds: Evangelism, Principalities and Powers and the African Pentecostal Imagination,” *International Review of Mission* 96, no. 382-383 (2007): 310.

invisible world and bring about physical healing and improvements of material conditions by fighting spiritual battles against demons.”⁷⁵⁰ Therefore, the Pentecostal core belief in the power of the Holy Spirit to give immediate meaning to things in the physical is an important attraction for Ghanaians since it is parallel with their notion of life and they can therefore relate to it.

In the end, PMs “affirm the enchanted worldview of the indigenous people of Ghana by taking these views seriously and presenting an interventionist theology through which the fears and insecurities of the African Christians are dealt with.”⁷⁵¹ For this reason, PMs’ “emphasis (on) the supernatural realm of spirits and powers encompassing the religious, cultural, socio-political and economic lives of the people ... is considered as a strong factor that makes the gospel practical to people.”⁷⁵² Consequently, this theology has “captured the ideological attention of Ghanaian popular media, society, and the political elite.”⁷⁵³ Realising this, and recognising Pentecostal churches’ “ability to organise people on a mass base,”⁷⁵⁴ and to superior power that secures and preserves political leadership, politicians aim to tap into such groups for the purpose of political mobilisation and spiritual protection. On the other hand, Pentecostal churches and their actors have also independently tried to influence political decision making in Ghana.⁷⁵⁵ Take, for example, this observation by a former General Secretary of the Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Council:

For a very long time, the Pentecostal churches tried not getting involved in national issues. The Christian Council and Catholic Bishops Conference were their main voice. Things began to change when the Council (Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Council) realized that PMs form a majority, so we began to speak on national issues...⁷⁵⁶

Accordingly, in more recent times, as the Pentecostal movement has burgeoned, there has also been much greater interest in political life and the desire to influence it. Thus, Christian leverage in the Fourth Republic has not been dominated by the HMCs alone, but by PMs who have become a force in the political arena.

⁷⁵⁰ Birgit Meyer, “Commodities and the Power of Prayer: Pentecostalist Attitudes towards Consumption in Contemporary Ghana,” *Development and Change* 29 (1998): 761.

⁷⁵¹ Gifford, *Christianity in Africa: Its Public Role*, 328–329.

⁷⁵² Andrew Anane-Asane, “Investigation of the Akan Discourse of the Spirit Reality in Contextual Theologizing in Ghanaian Pentecostalism” (Trinity International University, 2010), 2.

⁷⁵³ Reich, “Christian Institutions in Ghanaian Politics: Social Capital and Investments in Democracy,” 8.

⁷⁵⁴ Meyer, “Pentecostalist Culture on Screen: Magic and Modernity in Ghana’s New Mediascape”.

⁷⁵⁵ John Pobee, *Religion and Politics in Ghana* (Accra: Asempa Publishers, 1991), 11.

⁷⁵⁵ Elom Dovlo, “Religion and Politics in Africa: The Ghanaian Case,” in *Africa through Ghanaian Lenses*, ed. Samuel E. Quainoo (New York: Vestal International Press, 2004), 202.

⁷⁵⁶ Interview with Samuel Antwi.

7.2.2 Democratic Factor

Nonetheless, the expression of these Pentecostal theologies will not be popular if the context to express these views was not conducive or tolerant of divergent views. Ghana's return to democratic rule in 1993 at which the nation declared itself as a secular state paved the way for all religious groups including PMs to freely propagate their religion without any restriction from government or any dominant religious or social force within the nation-state. Therefore, the democratic setting within which PMs operate currently is a major factor that has propelled them into the political sphere because it provides freedom of worship and to work for remedies when these rights are violated.

Ghana's present democratic culture guarantees freedom of association, worship and speech,⁷⁵⁷ unlike the era of military dictatorship, which clamped down on religious groups and even attempted to regulate religious activities through decrees.⁷⁵⁸ Article 21; sections C and E of the 1992 Constitution guarantees general fundamental freedoms, including freedom to practise any religion and to manifest such practice as well as freedom of assembly.⁷⁵⁹ This has enabled all faith-based organisations including PMs to worship freely and peacefully without any fear of state interference and intimidation. Article 33; clause 1 specifically provides for a right to redress in the event of the abuse of this law as follows:

Where a person alleges that a provision of this Constitution on the fundamental human rights and freedoms has been, or is being or is likely to be contravened in relation to him, then, without prejudice to any other action that is lawfully available that person may apply to the High Court for redress.⁷⁶⁰

The 1992 constitution also guarantees media freedom and a liberal media landscape that was previously controlled by the state. This opening served as a catalyst for the Pentecostal theological message, as it used contemporary media as the main vehicle to spread this message. Article 21 clause A of Ghana's constitution guarantees all manner of persons freedom of speech and expression, which shall include freedom of the press and other media.

The privatisation of the media landscape is provided for in Chapter 1s2 of the 1992 Constitution. The relevant portion is Article 162(3): There shall be no impediments to the establishment of private press or media; and in particular, there shall be no law requiring

⁷⁵⁷ It must be noted however that all Ghanaian constitutions beginning with the 1969 Constitution made provisions for fundamental human rights and freedoms. See Quashigah, *The 1992 Constitution of Ghana*, 8.

⁷⁵⁸ Dovlo, "Religion in the Public Sphere," 642. See also Africa Watch, "Ghana: Official Attacks on Religious Freedom," Religious Freedom (United States of America, May 18, 1990)., U.S. Department of State, International Religious Freedom Report, Ghana (1999) available at http://www.cesnur.org/testi/irf/irf_ghana99.html, Government of Ghana, "Religious Bodies Registration (PNDCL 221)," 1989.

⁷⁵⁹ Government of Ghana, "1992 Constitution," 21.

⁷⁶⁰ Government of Ghana, "1992 Constitution," 30.

any person to obtain a license as a prerequisite to the establishment or operation of a newspaper, journal or other media for mass communication or information.⁷⁶¹

During the immediate post-independence era, it was mainly the HMCs that had access to national radio and television because since 1959, democratically elected governments and this stream of Christianity cooperated in matters of national religious ceremonies and commemorations. Hence the former had more media access.⁷⁶² This changed during the military rule of the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) regime (1981-1992). J.J. Rawlings, as part of his cultural revolution that sought a return to the nation's cultural roots,⁷⁶³ banned Christian broadcast and replaced it with the programmes of the Afrikania Mission.⁷⁶⁴ This was aimed at discrediting the HMCs which had consistently collided with his regime as the former insisted on democratic rule. However, all these changed post-1992 with the privatisation of the media.⁷⁶⁵

All state-owned media are enjoined by Article 163 of the 1992 Constitution to “afford fair opportunities and facilities for the presentation of divergent views and dissenting opinions.”⁷⁶⁶ Meaning, post-1992 PMs also have access to both public and private television and radio stations while, as indicated earlier, others who can afford it have established their own radio and television stations.

Today Mensa Otabil, Joseph Eastwood Anaba, Dag Heward Mills, Charles Agyin-Asare, Sam Korankye Ankrah and Duncan Williams, do not only have daily radio broadcasts, but also weekly television programmes that are aired nationally and internationally on different networks at different times and on different days. Others also have recorded versions of their sermons telecast or aired in other continents where they have a following or ministries. In recent times, Action Chapel International and Light House Chapel International have commissioned

⁷⁶¹ Government of Ghana, 101.

⁷⁶² Casely B. Essamuah, “Speaking Truth to Power: Ghanaian Methodists’ Public Witness 1960-2000.,” (Paper, 2007), 11, <http://www.methodistheritage.org.uk/missionary-history-essamuah-speaking-truth-2007.pdf>.

⁷⁶³ Marleen De Witte, “Spirit Media : Charismatics, Traditionalists, and Mediation Practices in Ghana” (University of Amsterdam, 2008), 227.

⁷⁶⁴ Afrikania Mission is a Neo-Traditional Movement established in Ghana in 1982 by a former Catholic Priest, Kwabena Damuah, who resigned from the church and assumed the traditional priesthood titles, Osofo Okomfo. The Mission aims to reform and update African traditional religion, and to promote nationalism and Pan-Africanism. Rather than being a single new religious movement, Afrikania also organises various traditional shrines and traditional healers into associations bringing unity to a diffused system and thereby a greater voice in the public arena.” See Elom Dovlo, “Afrikania Mission,” ed. Peter Clarke, *Encyclopaedia of New Religious Movements*, Reader in Modern History and Fellow (New York: Routledge, 2006), 12–14.

⁷⁶⁵ Peter Arthur, “Democratic Consolidation in Ghana: The Role and Contribution of the Media, Civil Society and State Institutions,” *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics* 48, no. 2 (2010): 209. See also Act 449 of Ghana’s 1992 Constitution. The repeal of the criminal code on 27 July 2001 by parliament guaranteed further media freedom. The repeal did away with sections of the law that made some media reportage libel and constituted criminal offences.

⁷⁶⁶ Government of Ghana, “1992 Constitution,” 101.

their own television and radio stations respectively.⁷⁶⁷ The CPMs are also catching up. For instance, the Apostolic Church–Ghana and the Church of Pentecost (CoP) now have weekly television and radio programmes as well as monthly newsletters.⁷⁶⁸

It must, however, be noted that while the 1992 Constitution guarantees all these media rights to all persons including religious groups, it is the PMs, especially their Charismatic variants that have made very good use of this opportunity, with other religious groups now catching up. What has sustained the PMs is not the ability of PMs to raise funds through donations and sponsorships to pay for this service,⁷⁶⁹ but their long standing ability to harness media technologies in their ministries even before the media was liberalised.

Consequently, Ghana's return to constitutional rule was in the main a catalyst in helping to project to a wider section of the Ghanaian society and others elsewhere, Pentecostal views specifically on politics and on the public sphere more generally. Birgit Meyer sums up how the PMs have taken advantage of this liberalisation to enhance their ministries, and how this has contributed to the Pentecostal upsurge within the Ghanaian public sphere:

In Ghana Pentecostalism and especially electronic media appear to form an inseparable couple, while other religious groups are much less able to articulate themselves through them....The return to constitutional rule in 1992 and the subsequent liberalization and commercialization of media (has) transformed the relationship between state and society in general and between the state and Pentecostalism in particular.⁷⁷⁰

In summary, increased membership owing to an appealing theology that was enhanced by the harnessing of media technologies and delivered through private and public media made possible by Ghana's return to democratic rule is the main factor that has driven the political saliency of PMs. The adoption of media resources by PMs has not only popularised their ministries, but it has also enhanced the public image of their leaders and brought their churches and their messages close to members and non-members. It has also shaped the religious discourse within the Ghanaian public space and rearticulated public discussions on political and other socio-economic issues during the 4th Republic.

7.3.0 Other Factors

Yet there are other indirect or remote factors within the nation state and changes within PMs that also contribute to the Pentecostal influence in political circles. These are the socio-

⁷⁶⁷ The Light House Chapel International has a radio station called 'Sweet Melodies,' while the Christian Action Faith Ministries has a recently commissioned Dominion Television (DTV)

⁷⁶⁸ The radio and television programmes are called the Apostolic Heritage Radio and the Apostolic Heritage Television Ministries respectively while the newsletter is called the Apostolic Herald

⁷⁶⁹ William K. Kay, "Pentecostalism and Religious broadcasting," *Journal of Beliefs and Values: Studies in Religion and Education* 30, no. 3 (2009): 249, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13617670903371555>.

⁷⁷⁰ Meyer, "Praise the Lord," 97.

economic conditions in Ghana and the increase in the number of Pentecostal leaders who are pursuing higher education.

7.3.1 Socio-economic Investments

With the abandoning of their sole focus on evangelism in anticipation of the Parousia, PMs are now focusing more on the social needs of their members and others within the society. PMs have relied on their numerical strength and the benevolence of their elites and middleclass members to pool resources to help the poor and vulnerable overcome the basic challenges of life particularly food, health and education.

These socio-economic investments have become necessary because successive governments have had difficulties in managing the Ghanaian economy over the years due to internal issues like corruption and other external shocks such as increases in the world prices of crude oil and the fluctuations in export commodities. Despite various policy interventions like the International Monetary Fund's Structural Adjustments, the Economic Recovery Programme, the Highly Indebted Poor Country programme and the current implementation of the Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda among others, the Ghanaian economy still faces a number of challenges, making the provision of social services and infrastructural development a difficult task for an elected government to grapple with alone.⁷⁷¹

Chapter three of this study has already outlined some Pentecostal interventions. These investments are thus filling the gaps seemingly created by governments' failure to meet the basic needs of the populace just as HMCs, para-church groups and civil societies have been doing over the years. Conversely, PMs are now stakeholders in the national economy and development which invariably brings them into contact with political actors as they complement their efforts.

To a large extent, the exposure of PMs to politics through their investments in the economic and other social protection interventions holds sway for Peter Berger's observation that "Pentecostalism, as it existed (then) among mostly poor and uneducated people, (was) unlikely to retain its (former) religious and moral characteristics unchanged, as many of these (churches) experience upward social mobility,"⁷⁷² as was witnessed in the United States.⁷⁷³ This

⁷⁷¹ Meyer, "Praise the Lord," 97. See also Mahamudu Bawumia, "Restoring the Value of the Cedi" (Visiting Professor of Economic Governance, Distinguished Speaker Series Lecture, Central University College, Ghana, March 25, 2014).

⁷⁷² Peter Berger, *The Desecularisation of the World: Resurgent Religion and World Politics* (Michigan: Grand Rapids, 1999), 12.

⁷⁷³ Berger, *The Desecularisation of the World*, 12.

means that inasmuch as governments still held power, it is evident that local movements such as the PMs are also asserting their place in civic affairs and political spheres.⁷⁷⁴

7.3.2 *Educated Leadership*

The new leadership of Pentecostal ministries, particularly the CPMs with higher educational backgrounds, has fostered more engagement with politics. Until the last two and a half decades, most PMs, especially those of the CPM strand, did not take theological training and general education seriously as they deemed it as unnecessary, once one had the gift of the Holy Spirit. CMs focused on basic theological training with most CMs whose ministries began with campus fellowships in public universities and other youth organisations undertaking theological training prior to the formation of their churches. For example, Duncan-Williams, Otabil and Charles Agyin-Asare are all products of Archbishop Benson Idahosa Bible Training School located in Benin City, Nigeria.⁷⁷⁵

This initial lack of interest in education has since changed with the CPMs now taking education very seriously. A typical example is the CoP's vision for ministerial training and development by 2018. Under this vision, the church notes that the Christian ministry is challenged by the dynamics and trends of the contemporary environment. This state of affairs calls for a constant upgrading and increasing of knowledge and skills in modern trends for all ministers to make them effective in their ministries.⁷⁷⁶ To this end, the church plans to make available relevant resources and training opportunities for the ministers. The CoP has outlined a vision to encourage ministers to pursue further ministerial training (Master of Theology or Master of Arts) as well as identify and sponsor at least five ministers who can pursue Master of Philosophy and Doctor of Philosophy degrees in theology and other disciplines such as leadership development, administration and management.⁷⁷⁷

Most top officials of CPMs including both the immediate past and current presidents of the CoP, Assemblies of God-Ghana and the Apostolic Church-Ghana have doctorate degrees usually in Theology. Many of these Pentecostal leaders are publishing their religious ideas and

⁷⁷⁴ Robert Wuthnow, "Introduction," *Encyclopaedia of Politics and Religion* (Washington: Congressional Quarterly Press, 2007), xxx.

⁷⁷⁵ Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, "Pentecostalism in Africa and the Changing Face of Christian Missions: Pentecostal/Charismatic Renewal Movements in Ghana," *Mission Studies* 19, no. 2 (2002): 30. See also Asamoah-Gyadu, "Born of Water and the Spirit: Pentecostal/Charismatic Christianity in Africa," 399–400.

⁷⁷⁶ The Church of Pentecost, "Vision 2018," 27.

⁷⁷⁷ The Church of Pentecost, 28.

spiritual teachings, as well as academic papers.⁷⁷⁸ The publications of Pentecostal pastors are projecting these churches' views and ideas which are being assimilated by a wider populace beyond their churches in the absence of similar publications on a similar scale by other larger religious streams like the HMCs. Elom Dovlo observed that in 1998 there were few "writings on spirituality or Christian life by the leadership (HMCs). Yet within the span of the past two decades, many pamphlets, tracts and books on spirituality and other issues that affect Christian lives have come from many Charismatic Churchmen."⁷⁷⁹

It is under this Pentecostal leadership with higher educational background in the likes of Opoku Onyinah, Michael Kwabena Ntumi, Alfred Koduah, Samuel Antwi and Paul Frimpong-Manso that these churches have witnessed a paradigm shift from being passive about political issues to encouraging more engagement and collaboration with the political parties. The reason for taking education seriously as Gifford has noted in reference to Agyin-Asare, was not only to enhance his ministry, but also to rub shoulders with the HMCs in the corridors of power.⁷⁸⁰ Furthermore, with higher education, the worldview of these leaders has been altered somewhat to engage the secular realm and also provide them with the necessary tools to better articulate the vision and aspiration of their ministries in a language that can be appreciated by the public.

These factors as discussed above are not mutually exclusive, but are inter-related, with one factor leading or giving rise to the other. The Pentecostal theological appeal, for instance, has led to increases in the numerical strength of the ministries that have been used to pool financial resources. These financial resources are accessed to further enlarge the ministries and to engage in social intervention programmes and investments. Again, the deregulation of the media in Ghana which has become a major vehicle for projecting Pentecostal views is a factor which was itself made possible by the return of Ghana to democratic rule in 1993. Nonetheless, the media presence of PMs has been very successful not only because of media liberalisation, but also the ability of PMs to better harness and appropriate media technologies which have long been part of this ministry even before the opening up of the media space was promulgated.

⁷⁷⁸ See for example the Academic papers of Opoku Onyinah and Koduah in this study. See that of Mensa Otabil and Duncan Williams used in this study. Most book publications of CMs leaders are inspirational, motivational, success strategies mostly based on biblical principle.

⁷⁷⁹ Dovlo, "The Church in Africa and Religious Pluralism," 59.

⁷⁸⁰ Gifford, "Ghana's Charismatic Churches," 259.

7.4.0 Conclusion

This chapter has analysed the factors that led to Pentecostal engagement in politics. The chapter has established that the two foremost reasons for PMs politicisation are the growth of Pentecostal churches and Ghana's return to democracy in 1993. The growth in the number of people who claimed affiliation with this stream of Christianity is one of the reasons that propelled these ministries to get involved in political issues to address the challenges of their members. The same growth which was occasioned by a theology that claims to have answers to the existential needs of Ghanaians, including political issues, is also responsible for exposing Pentecostals to the political sphere as political actors and strategists targeting this organised group for political mobilisation and tapping its spiritual resources for protection against political opponents.

Nonetheless, the PMs can thrive in a conducive and peaceful context which Ghana's return to democratic rule and the fundamental freedoms enshrined in the 1992 Constitution guarantees through free speech and media liberalisation—which serves as a major vehicle for projecting PMs' views. The chapter also showed how other factors, specifically a new crop of educated leaders and socio-economic investments, are also contributing to this politicisation albeit not on the same scale that the growth and political changes in Ghana have.

The next chapter is the conclusion of this study. The chapter analyses the distinctive novel engagement that has emerged as a result of the Pentecostal Ministries' shift from enclave to engagement and assesses the significance of this new Pentecostal mode of engagement with politics in Ghana. The implications will mainly focus on how the Pentecostal entry has impacted the milieu of Christian engagement with politics as well as the political sphere in Ghana.

CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION

Gone are the days when Mainline Protestant and Catholic churchmen were the acknowledged religious leaders, moving among the elites of business and government, with the pastors of independent churches excluded as uneducated nonentities (Bishop Charles Agyin-Asare, 1994).

8.0.0 Introduction

Working within the context of Ghana's current democratic era (Fourth Republic), during the third wave of democratisation in Africa, this study set out to address one key question concerning Pentecostal politics: is there a new and discernible Pentecostal political engagement, different from that of Historic Mission Churches (HMCs) and also from the Pentecostals' own past? It established that Pentecostal modes of engagement with politics are importantly different from those of the HMCs and that there has been a dramatic increase and transition in Pentecostal engagement. Pentecostals have moved from an 'enclave' approach to distinctive ways of interfacing with politics that are a departure from their past political praxis.

In examining Pentecostal political engagement in Ghana, this study has made a number of discrete, original and significant contributions to the academic study of religion, especially the understanding of Christianity, and in particular Pentecostal, political practices in Ghana. This chapter reviews these contributions and their implications for existing scholarship and for future studies.

8.1.0 Contribution to Academic Study

This thesis is a macro-level institutional study of Pentecostalism and politics in Ghana. It contributes to the scholarship that locates itself between "micro-anthropological studies and continent-wide generalisation".⁷⁸¹ The number and strands of the Pentecostal PMs addressed in the study fulfil the recommendation of scholars like Paul Freston and Birgit Meyer for more contextual studies of PMs and politics in Ghana. The multiplicity of Pentecostal modes of engagement, and varied understandings framing these engagements, required a study that moved beyond essentialised characterisations of Pentecostal politics. Analysis of a broad range of PMs has enabled this thesis to provide a more complicated and textured interpretation – one that moves beyond a single strand of Pentecostalism, with its enchanted worldview and teachings on material prosperity.

This thesis has tracked the transition of PMs from enclave to sustained political interest by mapping the trajectory of Pentecostal engagement with politics in Ghana. In doing so, the

⁷⁸¹ Paul Freston, *Evangelicals and Politics in AALA*, 113.

study has offered a more systematic account of changes within Pentecostal politics than previous analyses. It has tracked the shift of PMs from a period of limited interest to one in which they have become an integral part of the political process. While scholars of religion and politics have noted the increased political interest of PMs in Ghana, they have rarely offered an in-depth and comprehensive analysis of what occasioned previous Pentecostal passive attitudes towards politics and the factors that account for more recent change. This study has analysed these issues and showed the interrelations between the relevant factors. Specifically, it argued that PMs did not take an active part in politics because of their focus on evangelism and church planting. A second reason was the fear of state brutality from the authoritarian military regimes that characterised the pre-Fourth Republican era in Ghana. In addition, they lacked institutional structures to deal with the complexities of engaging with political actors. This difficulty was exacerbated by the limited education, and thus little familiarity with state political norms, of many early Pentecostal leaders.

The study also offered fresh perspectives on why PMs have taken more interest in politics during the period. Scholarly explanations have to date been limited. Among these, John F. McCauley's account of the Ghanaian context, and generally for West Africa, contends that the state's failure to provide the needs of the people engendered Pentecostal interest in politics – it created a gap for Pentecostals to fill as 'surrogate governments.'⁷⁸² However, having noted that different contexts, for example Nigeria and Latin America, suggest the salience of different factors in the politicisation of PMs, Chapter 7 followed Cedric Mayrargue in arguing for a more contextualised approach.⁷⁸³ In Ghana's particular case, this study highlighted two key overarching factors: the growth of Pentecostalism, and Ghana's return to democratic rule.

The interpretation of the political theologies that underpin Pentecostal political engagement in Ghana was a crucial element of this study. Building on Christian van Gorder, Rijk van Dijk and Joseph Quayesi-Amakye's studies of the political theology of single Pentecostal churches, this thesis analysed three Pentecostal churches spanning two distinct strands of PMs. This analysis makes a significant contribution to the academic literature on Ghana for two reasons. First, it is one of the few attempts at linking Pentecostal political practice (Chapters 3-5) to their theology. Such analysis provides an opportunity to access consistency, or otherwise, between Pentecostal rhetoric and their interventions. Second, it

⁷⁸² McCauley, "Africa's New Big," 1.

⁷⁸³ Mayrargue, "The Paradoxes of Pentecostalism," 13.

provides a comparative assessment of various theologies, allowing for an assessment of distinctiveness and commonalities in the PMs' understanding regarding politics.

The analysis in this study has also provided a timely update of some new developments since the works of Kwesi Dickson and Paul Gifford in the encounters between PMs and politics in particular, and more generally religion and politics in Ghana. One significant development concerns the emergence of a new mode of religious engagement. The development of 'divine predictions' shows that despite the Pentecostal transition to embrace politics in a direct manner (Chapters 3 and 4), PMs have not retreated from spiritualising politics. The study established 'divine prediction' as part of the larger transition in the Pentecostal response to political developments in Ghana. It represents a departure of PMs (that emphasise prophecy) from the pre-Fourth Republican era where they were co-opted by state actors to offer spiritual cleansing of the state due to the alleged bad deeds of previous leaders. The new mode involves projecting political happenings as a means of shaping and validating political action. Through 'divine prediction' NPMs have successfully 'claimed a space' within the political sphere, deploying a new and distinct type of engagement. This is also increasingly becoming the new face of Pentecostal engagement with politics in Africa.⁷⁸⁴

Another significant contribution of this study is its dynamic and novel demonstration that Pentecostal intervention in Ghanaian politics contributes to national development. While other studies have made similar claims, this study adopts a distinct approach. Quayesi-Amakye and Okyerefo have detailed various interventions of PMs in Ghana's economy and democracy, but this study goes further by investigating the extent to which these interventions align with the nation's developmental goals. Chapter 3 and 4 demonstrated that aspects of Pentecostal teachings deliberately promote democracy and economic development in ways that seek to advance Ghana's democratic culture and economic growth, aligning with broader developmental goals.

All of this evidence presents challenges for previous scholarly interpretations. In particular, Gifford's argument that the interventions of PMs are not transforming the Ghanaian economy in any way.⁷⁸⁵ Gifford's assessment is not entirely inaccurate, but it depends largely upon limited evidence relating to very particular elements within the Ghanaian Pentecostal

⁷⁸⁴ See similar developments in Ezra Chitando, Masiwa Ragies Gunda, and Joachim Kügler, eds., *Prophets and Profits and the Bible in Zimbabwe Series*, Bible in African Studies (Bamberg: University of Bamberg Press, 2013); Ezra Chitando, ed., *Prayers and Players: Religion and Politics in Zimbabwe* (Harare: Sapes Books, 2013); Richard Burgess, "Pentecostalism and Democracy in Nigeria: Electoral Politics, Prophetic Practices, and Cultural Reformation," *Nova Religio: The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions* 18, no. 3 (2015): 38–62.

⁷⁸⁵ Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity*, 190.

landscape. His conclusions are not representative of all PMs, but rather relate specifically to, one strand of Pentecostalism.⁷⁸⁶ His analysis of the Charismatics focuses primarily on their teachings concerning prosperity and their enchanted worldview.

This study broadened the scope of analysis, including other strands of Pentecostalism and Pentecostal umbrella organisations. It also went beyond considering their teachings and enchanted worldviews to compare their practices in terms of their direct participation in the democratic process and economic activities, analysing them in relation to Ghana's commitments as articulated in the African Union's Charter on democracy and Ghana's growth and development agenda. This analysis demonstrates that in certain respects Pentecostal understandings and actions engage, incorporate, rework the nation's democratic culture and broader economic development. It further reinforces the importance of systematic evaluation of the evidence concerning Pentecostal engagement—and of incorporating a broader range of PMs in this analysis, rather than relying as Gifford and others have, upon single strands such as the Charismatics.

8.2.0 Significance of the Study

Having reiterated the key contributions of the thesis, this section focuses on a cluster of themes that reveal important patterns in the interaction of PMs and politics in Ghana during the Fourth Republic. These themes demonstrate why PMs matter for the shape of contemporary Ghanaian politics. They relate to: shifts in engagements, innovations and new priorities, inter-religious relations, the redistribution of religious influence, and continuities and setbacks.

8.2.1 Shifts in Engagements

During the Fourth Republic, the role of PMs in Ghana's democracy has become more open and significant. They have broadened their participation in the democratic structures, including electoral politics, involvement in peaceful political transitions, advocacy on same-sex relations, and the right to worship. Such broadening has been allied with a greater willingness to employ secular processes and legal modes of argumentation, rather than relying primarily on biblical and moral frameworks. This development points to the PMs' acceptance of democracy as the best system of government for Ghana although some of their teachings, actions and orientations call into question their commitment to the very transition that now allows them to manifest their faith without any fear of state control.

⁷⁸⁶ Freston, *Evangelicals and Politics in AALA*, 145.

Direct participation in the democratic processes represents a shift from PMs' previous reliance on spirituality (spiritual warfare) and less direct political involvement. They now feel compelled to engage in secular realms in order to enact their agendas. PMs have not only been engaging political actors in the democratic process, but also engaging economically – through deliberate as well as incidental interventions. Their deliberate interventions represent a marked change from the previous focus on other-worldly issues.

Another major shift in the Pentecostal engagement concerns the introduction of 'divine predictions' as the new interface between politicians and religious leaders. In the pre-Fourth Republican era religious leaders were often co-opted by politicians to back unpopular initiatives or ritually 'purge the nation' of supposed demonic influences. More recently, Neo-Prophetic pastors have begun to court politicians, and politicians are responding to prophetic endorsements. These developments point to emergence of new forms of religious legitimacy, which political actors are acknowledging by—sometimes abandoning old sources of spiritual power to embrace new ones, at other times drawing upon both old and new in their attempts to consolidate political power.

The interpretation of Pentecostal practice examined through political theologies (Chapter 6) revealed a number of shifts in Pentecostal political thinking. The first shift relates to their emphasis on this-worldly power. Across the strands, Pentecostal writings, teachings and interviews clearly indicate that Pentecostal interventions in the political sphere are both eschatological (establishing the Kingdom of God on earth, including through advocating against social and political 'sin') but also thoroughly this-worldly orientation. Nevertheless, different theologies frame different Pentecostal interventions. While the study identified areas of commonality, such as a shared emphasis on 'individual responsibility,' many Pentecostal practices were informed by discrete theologies derived from diverse sources including biblical readings, the vision of the founder, political circumstances, and forces of supply and demand.

8.2.2 Innovations and New Priorities in Engagements

The Pentecostal entry into Ghana's democratic process has altered the dynamics of religious engagement with politics in Ghana. Through their innovations, and by pushing certain issues from the margins to the centre of political discourse, Pentecostals have been reshaping the political sphere.

One key innovation has been the use of both electronic and print media. Among the Christian churches today, it is the PMs rather than the HMCs that are investing heavily in media

technologies to instil their social and political vision among the citizenry.⁷⁸⁷ Through these media strategies PMs have created new spaces for shaping political and social discourse.⁷⁸⁸ They have gone beyond their collective statements through umbrella groups contained in annual communiqués, periodic pastoral letters and press releases. They now respond rapidly to social and political issues, deploying saturation media to drive home their views on particular political issues. Social media campaigns against the legalisation of same-sex marriage provide one particularly obvious example of this pattern, among others. This is an innovation in religious activism.

PMs are not only making certain issues salient in political discourses. They have also identified niche areas for intervention in the Ghanaian economy where gaps exist because of limited government resources. Their initiatives aim to complement government efforts. Such intervention is evident in Pentecostal investment in the creative arts, mental health, and finance for small business start-ups.

Furthermore, PMs are enhancing economic advocacy by demanding accountability from governments and also taking initiatives that target individuals, private enterprises and other non-governmental institutions whose activities also impact the economic life of the Ghanaian people. The demand for accountability incorporates challenges on a range of issues. PMs' demand that government justify its decisions on oil and gas explorations and programmes aimed at instilling corporate integrity are examples of this call for accountability that also speak of a broadening of economic activities. The use of 'divine prediction' to demand political accountability provides another striking example.

PMs have also developed distinctive political theologies, different from those of HMCs. With respect to the responsibility of the nation-state, for example, HMCs generally place less emphasis on ordinary citizens and focus their energies on political actors. By contrast, PMs encourage ordinary people to take up more responsibility. Pentecostals express marked differences on political thinking. While all agree that the role of the ordinary person is crucial for the prosperity of the state, they differ on the means for realising this. For instance, while ACI advocates direct invocation of God by the citizenry to bring prosperity to the nation, the ICGC insists the people must make right electoral choices in order to guarantee prosperity. The CoP recommends direct participation by PMs as political actors.

⁷⁸⁷ See Francis Benyah, "The Use of Mass Media by Charismatic Churches in Ghana: A Case Study of Perez Chapel International" (University of Ghana, 2014).

⁷⁸⁸ Rosalind I. J. Hackett, "'Devil Bustin' Satellites: How Media Liberalization in Africa Generates Religious Intolerance and Conflict," in *Displacing the State: Religion and Conflict in Neo-Liberal Africa*, ed. James Howard Smith and Rosalind I. J. Hackett (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2011), 165.

8.2.3 PMs and HMCs

Another key issue concerns how the Pentecostal shift to increased political engagement is impacting inter-religious relations in Ghana, in particular those between PMs and HMCs. At one-time, Ghanaian PMs criticised the HMCs for prioritising socio-economic needs over spiritual matters. This stance has shifted to the extent that PMs like the CoP now commend a holistic ministry⁷⁸⁹ that combines social and spiritual concerns as integral to ‘sowing the seed’ of the gospel in Ghana.⁷⁹⁰ In Miller and Yamamori’s terms, they are presently “pursuing the integral and holistic gospel in response to what they now accept as the example of Jesus who ministered to both the people’s physical needs as well as preached about the final consummation of the Kingdom of God.”⁷⁹¹

PMs have not only commended this holistic approach but have also begun collaborating with the HMCs on many developments in the political economy. For example, the GPCC’s collaboration with the CCG has helped to strengthen the ‘Christian front’ in advocacy on welfare matters. This has led to consolidation, with PMs and HMCs working together instead of operating different fronts in ways that created a sense of division between Christian churches that risked weakening overall influence. Annual joint statements provide a means through which they express shared concerns on socio-economic issues.

PMs have also filled the gaps left by the HMCs’ reduced engagement in the political process post-1992. After serving as a ‘surrogate opposition’ to secure democratic rule, HMCs have since ceded some of their activities to civil society organisations that were virtually non-existent in the pre-Fourth Republican era but have found their voice in the new democratic dispensation which has created space for enhanced civic activism. In the process, PMs have increased their activism in the civic square filling the gaps seemingly created by the HMCs (see Chapter 2). As a result of increased activism PMs have become the ‘alternative religious voice’ on politics, influencing and shaping political institutions through direct and collaborative participation.

⁷⁸⁹ Ntumy, “CoP& Impact on the Religious Life of Ghana,” 17–21.

⁷⁹⁰ Alfred Koduah, *Christianity in Ghana Today* (Accra: Alfred Koduah, 2004), 23–24.

⁷⁹¹ Miller and Yamamori, *New Face of Christian Social Engagement*, 21–22.

8.2.4 Redistribution of Religious Influence

Samuel P. Huntington has suggested that as the numbers of Christians increases, the activities of church leaders in democracy will not decline but increase.⁷⁹² This claim is true of Ghanaian Pentecostalism, which has grown on account of its theological appeal as well as broader socio-political factors such as Ghana's return to democracy. With numerical growth, there has also been a surge in the political influence of Pentecostal pastors and churches as a whole. The ability to attract Pentecostal voters has become increasingly important politically; courting of Pentecostal voters has become ever more prevalent through various means.

Pentecostal influence in politics has led to a redistribution of religious influence in the political sphere. While the influence of other religious groups like the HMCs has not necessarily waned, such groups no longer hold a monopoly on engagement with political actors. Redistribution of influence partly depends on demonstrated effectiveness. In this respect, PMs have begun to project themselves as credible and influential sources of power that can broker political deals. Their successful leading of negotiation involving the disputes over the creation of constituencies ahead of the 2012 election is an important example, alongside their influence in getting parties to publicly promise to accept the verdict of Ghana's Supreme Court on an election petition in the same election.

Despite their shift to greater political engagement, PMs have been in reasserting themselves as spiritual leaders in comparison to the HMCs. Through 'divine prediction,' for example, Neo-Prophetic pastors now claim that their ability to foresee events before they happen is a more potent and pre-emptive form of religious intervention in the political sphere as against mundane and reactive processes of spiritual warfare employed by the HMC and older Pentecostal ministries respectively. This projection of spiritual and religious authority has, in practical terms, been allied with a redistribution of political power. Divine predictions, particularly those relating to electoral forecasting, have become part of the toolkit of political suasion, where the NPMs pastors secure and validate the legitimacy of political actors.

8.2.5 Continuities and Setbacks

A key aspect of Pentecostal engagement with politics in Ghana concerns the continuity of spiritualising politics, of which 'divine predictions' (Chapter 5) is a prominent example. Yet another important continuity relates to the Pentecostal 'Kingdom mindedness'. This characteristic is evident in attitudes towards democratic principles. Kingdom mindedness refers

⁷⁹² Samuel P. Huntington, *The Third Wave* (Oklahoma: Oklahoma University Press, 1991), 79.

to a religious group whose attitude towards reality is not only shaped by spiritual causality but also by a conscious attempt to influence society through politics in preparation for the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth, even if this seems impossible.

In pursuance of this PMs are taking advantage of democracy by embracing aspects that it likes and re-negotiating that which does not promote their agenda. Their constant attacks of AIR as a satanic religion⁷⁹³ and their call on the government not to permit same-sex marriage because it is the legalisation of sin are typical examples.

One setback in Pentecostal political engagement which we choose to emphasise here is the public disagreements between Pentecostal leaders over prophecies. This casts doubts over the authenticity of some prophecies and raises credibility issues for the PMs. This state of affairs is heightened when conflicting prophecies are made which suggest a ‘double speak’ by a Christian God who is thought of as being consistent and not a God of confusion. These public spats over prophecies which are part of the broader struggle for dominance within Ghanaian Pentecostalism negatively impact the public image of PMs.

8.3.0 The Future of Pentecostal Politics

One way to build on this study is to use statistics, particularly that which measures how the interventions of other non-governmental organisations, especially religious groups in the economy of Ghana and by extension Africa impacts growth and development of countries. Robert D. Woodberry has noted such data can enhance the assessment of the impact of Pentecostal interventions in the economy⁷⁹⁴ which will be a useful resource to back qualitative research of the trends among religious people, their practices and how this impacts the socio-economic spheres. The availability of such a quantitative data will reduce assumptions as to how activities of Pentecostals and generally other religious groups are or are not helping to transform the economy of countries where they are established. This is a grey area which future research on religion and politics should pay attention to⁷⁹⁵

In summary the study has explained how and why PMs have transitioned from enclave to engagement in terms of their attitudes towards democratic governance, political economy and spirituality in the politics and has discussed the political and religious implications of this

⁷⁹³ See Max-Wirth, “Juju and Statecraft,” 93-100, 184-186.

⁷⁹⁴ Woodberry, “The Economic Consequences of Pentecostal Belief,” 29.

⁷⁹⁵ Some few exceptions are Kingsley S. Agomor and Samuel Adams, “Democratic Politics and Voting Behaviour in Ghana,” *International Area Studies Review* 18, no. 4 (2015): 365-381. Grossman, “Political Saliency of LGBTs, 349. Pew Research, “Spirit and Power.”

for Ghana, in terms of the rule of law, political stability, economic growth and religious influence in political circles.

APPENDIX

Face to Face Interviews

No	Respondent	Position	Date
1	Rev. Dr Amo Darko	Chaplain, President John Evans Ataa Mills	16/12/2014
2	Bishop Prince Benny Wood	Founder/Spokesperson Concerned Clergy Association of Ghana	23/12/014
3	Rev. Dr John Bando Ghartey	General Secretary, Assemblies of God-Ghana	09/01/2015
4	Rev. Prof. Aaron Mike Oquaye	Speaker of Parliament and Member New Patriotic Party	19/01/2015
5	Apostle Prof. Opoku Onyinah	Chairman, Church of Pentecost	21/01/2015
6	Apostle Samuel Antwi	General Secretary, Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Council	22/01/2015
7	Apostle Dr Alfred Koduah	Former General Secretary, Church of Pentecost	02/02/2015
8	Very Rev. Dr E.K. Gbordzoe	Former Moderator, Global Evangelical Church-Ghana	04/02/2015
9	Prophet John Yaw Adu	Founder/Leader, New Jerusalem Chapel	05/02/2015
10	Bishop Gideon Titi-Ofei	General Secretary, National Association of Charismatic and Christian Churches	10/02/2015
11	Mr. Ernest Asigri	Programmes Director, Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Council	25/02/2015
12	Mr. Wolanyo K. Agra	Personal Friend, President John Evans Ataa Mills	25/02/2015
13	Rev. Prof. Enoch Immanuel Agbozo	Founder and Leader, Evangelical Society of Ghana and Enoch Missions	27/02/2012
14	Bishop James Nana Ofori-Atta	Supervising Minister, Compassion in Action, ACI	23/04/2015
15	Bishop James Saah	Senior Bishop, Action Chapel International	23/04/2015
16	Miss. Josephine Taylor	Manager, Compassion in Action, Action Chapel International	20/04/2015
17	Rev. Dr Michael Osah Tettey	Minister, International Central Gospel Church	29/04/2015

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